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Arab-Israeli Talks

Jordan To Open Bank Branches in Territories

TA0112203393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Text] Israel and Jordan today signed an agreement permitting Jordanian banks to open branches in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The agreement was achieved in the economic talks held in Washington with the participation of Israel, the United States, and Jordan.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that the agreement was signed by Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein and the Jordanian ambassador in Washington. Under the agreement, the Bank of Israel and Central Bank of Jordan will jointly supervise the Jordanian banks in the territories.

Our correspondent Menahem Friedman reports that as soon as a permit is issued by Bank of Israel's Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles, Jordanian banks will be able to reopen branches which operated in the territories before the Six-Day War and open new branches as well. The new Jordanian banks will enable the Palestinians to obtain credit lines even before central and commercial Palestinian banks are established.

Sha'th Discusses Progress in Negotiations

JN0212175793 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 2 Dec 93 p 15

[Text] Cairo—The Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on the Gaza-Jericho agreement made progress during the Palestinian-Israeli Security Committee meetings in Cairo. Israel ceded 170 square km which it was demanding for its settlements in the Gaza Strip, in addition to 36 square km on which settlements were already built.

Nabil Sha'th, President Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, said that this is considered progress in the negotiations. However, he said, there are many problems that have not been solved yet and are obstacles to implementing the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles as scheduled.

He added that the Palestinian stand stresses that there can be no Gaza without Jericho. Israel seeks to turn Gaza into something symbolic or marginal that has no value. It seeks to do so by defining its area as 27 square km only. This is rejected by all Palestinians.

In another development, Dr. Sha'th noted that the Palestinian delegation will not sign any agreement with the Israeli side on 13 December, as stipulated by the declaration of principles, before receiving a written pledge from the Israeli side that secures the release of Palestinian detainees from prisons and detention centers. He said: We consider these detainees to be hostages and there are more than 10,000 detainees. He added that none of these detainees has been forgotten and that the Palestinian delegation presented an integrated plan, which is the only hope for the release of the prisoners, and that the plan will be negotiated even though the Israeli side is delaying the implementation date.

The political adviser asked the parties concerned to shoulder their responsibility to try to save the peace process. He said that the Egyptian role is the only one supporting the Palestinian stand. He also noted the Palestinians dedication to continuing the negotiations with the Israelis until the end so there is no excuse for delaying the implementation of the agreement regarding time. Sha'th added that the Palestinian negotiators asked that the Egyptian-Palestinian border be open for joint Palestinian-Egyptian-Arab investment. Moreover, he said, the Palestinian negotiators requested building an international Egyptian-Palestinian airport at this border, which Israel wants to turn into a closed Israeli military border, something unacceptable to us. He stressed that Palestine will not be a bridge for Israel to cross over to Arab countries.

Sha'th added that there will be no Middle Eastern market before a joint Arab market is established and that the Palestinian negotiator accepts nothing less than a comprehensive Arab solution.

We wonder: What will the next rounds of talks lead to? This will be revealed in the next few days.

Discusses Peace Progress

BR0212154593 Rome L'UNITA in Italian 2 Dec 93 p13

[Interview with Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat and leader of the Palestinian delegation to the Cairo talks, by Umberto De Giovannangeli; place and date not given: "If Rabin Hesitates, Peace Is Over"]

[Text] "The negotiations are in jeopardy. Postponing the implementation of the Washington accords would only mean playing the game of those that want to shelve the talks." This is what Nabil Sha'th maintains. He is political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat and the leader of the Palestinian delegation to the Cairo talks. At this crucial moment for the peace process, he is the man who can best sum up the Israeli-Palestinian negotations.

[De Giovannangeli] How do you assess the development of negotiations with Israel concerning the implementation of autonomy in Gaza and Jericho?

[Sha'th] The situation is quite a difficult one. However, it would be a tragedy if entrenchments and incomprehension were to prevail on both sides. It would mean letting the hopes that were created in Washington on 13 September die. Despite Israel's resistance, something is moving and in these hours we are witnessing some progress in the bilateral negotiations.

[De Giovannangeli] What has been the most important step forward?

[Sha'th] It concerns the surface area of the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, which the Israelis have reduced from the 170 square km they have been claiming to 36 square km, an area that will house the quarters of the Israeli troops. It is a first, important result but this alone is not sufficient to give a renewed impulse to the negotiation.

[De Giovannangeli] What are you asking Rabin for today?

[Sha'th] You see, there are fundamentally two decisive issues: defining the dimensions of the area of Jericho under Palestinian administration and control, which the Israelis are currently claiming, and the bridges and border crossing points between the Gaza Strip and Egypt, and between Jericho and the West Bank. The Israeli Government would like to limit the area of Jericho placed under our self-government to only 27 square km compared to the 340 square km we are requesting. Behind this "kilometer" argument lies a strategically important political fact: For the PLO the effective control of the area of Jericho represents a decisive element for guaranteeing the unity of the territories on which the Washington accords are based. Reducing the area of Jericho to a "symbolic postal stamp" would mean dismantling the scaffolding that sustains the entire peace process. Finally, let me add that the issue of controlling the borders is no less important than that of defining the area of Jericho. As far as we are concerned one thing is certain: We will not be Israel's stepping stone toward the Arab countries.

[De Giovannangeli] Over the past few days violence has once again entered daily life in the territories. How can a stop be put to this new wave of bloodshed?

[Sha'th] Among the Palestinians of Gaza and Jericho there is a rising fear that the accords of 13 September will remain a "piece of paper." In other words there is a fear that Israel wants to push for time to "water down" the contents of the agreement. These fears are fostering intolerence and it means playing the game of Hamas and the "refusal front." In order to curb the violence it is necessary to demonstrate that peace is really moving on, that things are really changing. For this reason we are saying to Yitzhaq Rabin: Delaying the withdrawal of Israeli soldiers from the Gaza Strip (planned for 13 December—L'UNITA editor's Note) is encouraging terrorism and strengthening the radicals. The dramatic events of the past few days bear witness to this. The Israeli Government knows very well that the PLO is ready to take on all responsibility in relation to the internal security of the two territories and the borders with the Jewish State. But arresting Fatah militants or maintaining a massive military presence in the towns in the Gaza Strip does not mean working for peace. By doing this Israel is reinforcing the arguments of those who maintain that nothing has changed after 13 September.

[De Giovannangeli] Among the contentious issues that are still unresolved is that of Palestinian prisoners. At what point are the talks?

[Sha'th] The Israeli negotiators have committed themselves to drawing up a schedule for the liberation of a large majority of the Palestinians still in prison. We are asking them to respect this commitment. The liberation of 12,000 Palestinians that have been imprisoned for crimes connected with the intifadah would be viewed in the territories as proof of the fact that peace is not only a signature.

[De Giovannangeli] Over the past few weeks there is once again talk of serious disputes at the head of the PLO. How do things really stand?

[Sha'th] The news of an "isolated 'Arafat" being subjected to the most disparate protests crops up again and again. This happened before the Washington accord as well, but then reality did justice to these inferences. The truth is that a "nondiplomatic" comparison is under way within our organization regarding the composition of the organisms for self-government. We must take account of the expectations of the diaspora and those of the leaders within the organization: Reconciling the various needs is not easy. But we are discussing this in Tunis. There is a big difference between this and stating that 'Arafat is being abandoned even by his most faithful supporters. The Washington accords bear the signatures of Yasir 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin, whose political destinies are now closely linked: They will be the ones to see the peace plan through. But if this should not happen, if Abu-'Ammar should lose, it will certainly not be in the name of democracy. In that case, Hamas will not be the winners, but those, be they in Damascus or in Tehran, who want to punish the Palestinians for having "dared for peace."

Leaves for Tunis

NC0212161593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, left Cairo this afternoon on a four-day visit to Tunis. While there, he will take part in the meetings of the Palestinian leadership, which will begin later today under the chairmanship of 'Arafat and which will last for two days.

Speaking to reporters before his departure from Cairo airport, Dr. Sha'th noted the importance of the Palestinian leadership's meeting, which will precede 'Arafat's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher scheduled for Monday [6 December] in Amman. He added that 'Arafat will visit Cairo after his meeting with Christopher to meet with President Husni Mubarak, noting that 'Arafat and Christopher will meet again in Tunis at the end of Christopher's Middle East tour. These meetings, he added, will precede 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, which is expected to be held on 12 December.

Dr. Sha'th noted that another round of Palestinian-Israeli talks will begin in Cairo on Sunday and will be followed by another round in al-'Arish on Tuesday. Sha'th leads the Palestinian side to the Gaza-Jericho talks.

Asked about the recent incidents in Gaza, Sha'th noted that these events have aroused the concern of the Palestinians and the Palestinian leadership. Sha'th voiced his absolute rejection of the Israeli military provocations, including the murder of some strugglers who are trying to safeguard the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. He added: We hold the Israeli leadership fully responsible for what is happening, although the situation is now one of guarded calm. Sha'th stressed that the problem will be solved only through compliance with the principles of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, which was signed in Washington on 13 September, and the start of the implementation of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, which will be followed by the arrival of international troops and the entry of the Palestinian security forces. He added that this would provide security for the Palestinians and, therefore, we insist on implementing the agreement on schedule.

Sha'th added that the Israeli leadership and Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin will be held fully responsible for any delay in the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement because the terms of the agreement are clear. Sha'th referred to the issues of the Palestinian prisoners and detainees and the crossing points in the West Bank and Gaza. He added: We are in the process of finding a solution to secure the release of the Palestinian detainees. As for the problem of the crossing points and settlements, it has not yet been settled, and an Israeli decision is needed. Sha'th added: I see no difficulty in resolving this problem, and, once the Israelis honor what they signed in the agreement, it should not take long to settle. He noted that there is a timetable for the negotiations with the Israelis that will run until 11 December. He stressed in this regard that the Palestinians will continue to participate in the talks up to the final moment.

Concluding his remarks, the Palestinian official noted that the fact that some fundamental problems still exist and that the deadline for implementing the Palestinian-Israeli agreement is nearing constitute an element of pressure by the Israeli negotiators on us to secure the maximum possible gains for the Israelis from the negotiations.

It should be noted that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement stipulates that the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho must start on 12 December.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic Forum Held in Khartoum on Peace Accord

PM0112143693 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 5

[Report by Kamal Hamid: "Al-Turabi: Popular Conference To Discuss Palestinian-Israeli Peace Agreement"]

[Excerpt] Khartoum—Dr. Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, secretary general of the Islamic Arab Popular Conference [and leader of the Sudanese National Islamic Front], has announced that the meetings of the conference's second session, scheduled to begin in Khartoum next Thursday, will discuss the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement and will witness the signing of a peace agreement among the Afghan factions.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH al-Turabi said that "membership of the conference will not be confined to Islamists, as there are Arabism tendencies and Arab and Islamic ideological parties which will attend by invitation." Al-Turabi revealed that contacts are being made to persuade Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid to initiate a dialogue to resolve Yemeni disputes.

AL-HAYAH has learned that a number of Islamic figures from Egypt and Algeria will attend the conference, which is seeking to resume the mediation it began earlier between the [Algerian] Government and the "Algerian Salvation Front." The conference will also discuss the issue of the blockade against Libya and the Islamic plan in Sudan. [passage omitted]

'Hundreds' Attend Conference

NC0212141293 Paris AFP in English 1220 GMT 2 Dec 93

[By Nadra Saouli]

[Text] Khartoum, Dec 2 (AFP)—Hundreds of Islamic leaders opened a conference in the Sudanese capital on Thursday with Palestinian hardliners seeking support for their rejection of the Israeli-PLO peace deal.

Bosnia, Somalia and U.S. terrorism charges against Khartoum also figured high on the agenda of the three-day conference, hosted by Sudan for the second time in as many years.

But the September 13 accord on Palestinian autonomy dominated the first working group of the People's Arab Islamic Conference, attended by some 400 Sunni and Shiite Moslem leaders.

Almost 60 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe were represented.

Palestinian hardliners, notably the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Damascus-based groups, said they were seeking Moslem support for their rejection of the deal.

They have denounced the accord on autonomy starting in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho as a sell-out of Palestinian rights, vowing to fight on until the destruction of Israel.

Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman Yasir 'Arafat, at the forefront of the drive for peace with Israel, has been invited to the conference, a participant said.

A Hamas official said the group would not rule out a meeting with 'Arafat although they were unlikely to reach any understanding.

"What's important for us is to make sure we do not kill each other in the occupied territories and get dragged into a Palestinian civil war as Israel wants," according to Khalid Abu-al-'Umarayn, the Hamas envoy to Yemen.

Hamas is one of 10 Palestinian groups opposed to the accord.

Hasan al-Turabi, representing the Islamic fundamentalist, military junta ruling Sudan and organizer of the conference, said he would try to unite Arab and Islamic ranks.

A delegation from Iraq is also expected at the conference, along with officials from Afghanistan. The Iranian delegation, for the first time, was not headed by a top-ranking official.

Mustafa Cabic, the mufti or religious leader of Bosnia, chaired the coordination committee.

More than 500 Moslem figures were invited, but among the absentees were Afghan President Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Yemen's Islamic party leader Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar and Rashed Ghannushi, the leader of Tunisian fundamentalists.

Organizers said that they stayed away for personal reasons, along with George Habash, the Christian leader of the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Sudan's al-Turabi Greets Participants

EA0212151193 Khartoum SUNA in English 0920 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—The Popular Arab and Islamic Congress (PAIC) opened here today the session of its second meetings in the Friendship Hall, in which a number of Islamic and Arab representatives are participating. [The] secretary general of the PAIC, Dr. Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi, greeted the participants in his inaugural session address. The congress meeting will continue in morning and evening sessions till Sunday morning, 5th December.

Al-Turabi Delivers Opening Address

EA0212153193 Khartoum SUNA in English 0925 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—The secretary general of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference [PAIC], Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, has called for renewing and unifying Islam in the Asian continent to lock the door before any separation among Muslims here. In his inaugural speech before the conference here [on] Thursday, Dr. al-Turabi pointed to the Islamic minorities in Asia, such as in [the] Philippines, China [and] in particularly Kashmir, where conflicts are going on but the international legality [as received] failed to rescue [it], saying that in some of those countries the tortured Muslims were persuaded to migrate and take refuge. He indicated that Pakistan is facing international pressure not to possess a nuclear power [as received] and Afghanistan is conflicting because the West does not want its unity and promotion of the Islamic project.

Concerning Iran, which revolted against the shah, al-Turabi said that Iran is trying to cancel futile [word missing] and implement rightness, but the West is conspiring against it to retaliate for the Islamic Iranian revolution.

He called on [the] delegations from far Asia, Indonesia, Malaysia and all the participants to review the experience of the Asian Islamic rising towards peace and the formation of Islamic state.

Al-Turabi on European Muslims

EA0212160093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1012 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—The secretary general of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference PAIC, Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, has described the conference as a chance of the Muslims to overcome their history of separation to the present of unification. Addressing the inaugural session of the second session of the conference here Thursday, Dr. al-Turabi is a gathering for those who call for economic justice, intellectual and political freedom and those who call for nationalism and for Islam. [sentence as received] He added that the conference is also a field for good coexistence between religions, pointing out that it [will] also address Christians, particularly the churchmen. The conference is taking place because it gives top concern to protect our minority Muslims in Europe [and] to defend their presence and rights in order to be a symbol for Islam there to protect Muslims' issues, Dr. al-Turabi said.

He pointed out the torture which Muslims in all Europe and the U.S. is [as received] facing currently, particularly if they call for their special worships or freedom in their rights in culture, education or general rights, or they call for their sacreds [as received] not to be insulted. Dr. al-Turabi pointed to the posing a problem confirmed that some Europeans there became. [sentence as received]

The secretary general of the PAIC, Dr. Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi confirmed that the Arab and Islamic support to the Palestinian issue is languishing, combined with loyalty and enmity, and the European [as received] has abandoned the international legislation towards Palestine.

He added while addressing the inaugural session of the PAIC congress this morning that the future of the Palestinians and situations of the PLO, Jihad and intifadah uprising do not receive the needed support. He pointed out that the U.S. support to Israel is increasing by supplying it by arms even after the peace project. He added that the Palestinians have disagreed and he called on the conference to patronage [as received] the Palestinian freedom.

Delegates Address Conference

EA0212161293 Khartoum SUNA in English 1136 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—The opening session of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference, PAIC, Thursday listened to short speeches from the heads of the delegations.

'Abd-al-Hamad (?al-Hadi), chairman of the Yemeni delegation, who hailed the PAIC, said that the PAIC holds its sessions in a critical regional international and Islamic situation, pointing out that there is conspiracy targeted [at] the Islamic nation to dominate its potentialities.

He urged the conferees to support the Muslim issues, [at the] top of them is Palestine issue.

The Yemeni representative deplored the blockade imposed on Libya.

The chairman of Italian delegation focused on the universality of the Islam message that it directed to the world in Arabic verses. He said that Muslims should guide the world.

Muhammad Sa'id al-No'Man from Iran hailed Dr. Hasan al-Turabi's speech and also hailed the Sudanese people, who are experiencing the plots and their firm stance is a proud [as received] for all Muslims. He also hailed Muslims' struggle in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan. Al-No'Man cautioned Muslims to Judaism's plots against Islam and Muslims.

Dr. Halimah An'Am from Nigeria spoke about the woman and urged the conference to educate the woman.

Eizam [as received] from Britain stressed on the importance of the unification of the Islamic nation, calling the generation of the Islamic uprising. He said that Muslims are in great challenge to be [or] not to be.

Na'if Hawatimah from Palestine hailed Sudan, Iraq and Libya, saying that Sudan represents the strategic depth to Palestine. Hawatimah urged the conferees to adopt a resolution supporting the Palestinian right in establishing their independent state as well as backing up all Islamic issues in the developing countries.

The representative of Turkey pointed out while addressing the PAIC inaugural session this morning to the tear which the Islamic nation suffers, pointing to the Palestinian issue and the Somali dispute and what the Muslims face in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He called on all the Muslims to unify and not to leave their problems to the U.N., which is hegemonized by other states, such as America. He asked why the Islamic agencies cannot transport relief directly to the affected in Bosnia. He called for the unity of Muslims even if it [is] necessary to form a new United Nations body or a joint defensive alliance for the Islamic states.

Meanwhile, the representative of Jordan has hailed in his address Sudan's experience under the shadow of Islamic shari'ah, saying that we want a unified Islamic world to be ruled by faith.

Tajikistan representative expressed hope that the conference shall be a good chance to heal the wounds caused by colonialism powers, indicating to the Muslims' hardship in Palestine and Kashmir. He urged the conferees to narrow the point [as received] news regarding the different Islamic issues and assisting in (?settling) the internal issues of Islamic states. He enumerated the impending risks, saying that colonialism seeks to dismember the Islamic nation.

Al-Turabi on 'Conspiracies'

EA0212162593 Khartoum SUNA in English 1025 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—Secretary general of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference Dr. Hasan al-Turabi said that Sudan is now creating justice by the distribution of authorities, culture and wealth. He reviewed in his address to the opening session of the conference here Thursday [2 December] the conspiracies against Sudan to get rid of its Islamic experience, confirming that Islam is spreading all over the African countries surrounding Sudan, in addition to all central and southern Africa.

Sudan is relying on itself to develop its policies and economy, he said.

Al-Turabi: West Recolonizing Somalia

EA0212163293 Khartoum SUNA in English 0912 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—Secretary general of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference (PAIC), Dr. Hasan al-Turabi said that the West has returned to Somalia to revive colonialism using the UN's authority to control the people's future and to stop the spread of political independence and Islam. He explained in his address before the inaugural session of the PAIC meetings this morning that the Arab League and the Islamic States Congress didn't carry on their role towards Somalia and that Somalia hasn't received any sort of support. Al-Turabi pointed out that the Somali people have protected their freedom by presenting a large number of martyrs and had suffered from poverty till the African horn broke the U.S. aggression. He called on the conference to exert efforts to (?conciliate) the political dispute between the fighting Somali factions.

Al-Bashir Comments on Goals

EA0212183093 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, president of the republic, has called on the Islamic nation to show unity and cohesion to get out of its crises. He pointed out that the convening of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference is regarded as an opportunity for a new start for the Islamic nation.

His excellency also said that the Islamic nation is passing through critical circumstances and is exposed to conspiracies on the part of its enemies. This was stated while in a meeting in his office at the Friendship Hall today with a number of delegations participating in the second session of the conference. He illustrated this by pointing out the suffering that Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Somalia, and Libya are enduring. Lieutenant General al-Bashir refuted allegations by the Western media concerning violations of human rights and the practice of terrorism in Sudan.

His excellency expressed his regret at the differences and fighting currently occurring between the Afghan factions. He called on Afghan leaders to forget their differences, whatever they may be, in order to confront the forces that are lying in wait for the Islamic nation. Lieutenant General al-Bashir reaffirmed everlasting relations between Sudan and Egypt. His excellency also hailed Iraq's solidarity with Sudan as it faces the designs of the forces of aggression and imperialism.

He called for the continuation of dialogue and Islamic jihad to liberate Palestine and southern Lebanon. He also renewed the call for the continuation of the struggle in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Somalia, and all the areas that are suffering from the conspiracies of the forces of the new world order. This all occurred today when the lieutenant general met with delegations participating in the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, and Italy.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO Statement Warns of Danger to Peace

LD0212181693 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] At the conclusion of the meetings of the Palestinian leadership [in Tunis], an official Palestinian source made the following statement: During its meetings on 30 November and 1 December 1993, the Palestinian leadership studied the serious deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories in the last weeks, and also the range of political developments. The PLO is looking very seriously at this deterioration, resulting from the practices of the Israeli Army and the Israeli settlers, that led to the falling of large numbers of martyrs and wounded from among the sons of our people.

These practices, together with the continuous isolation of Jerusalem, constitute a blatant violation of the spirit and substance of the Declaration of Principles Agreement signed between the PLO and the Israeli Government. These practices also coincide, and are associated with, the procrastination of the Israeli Government over a faithful and meticulous carrying out of the agreement, and meeting what is due on 13 December [start of withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho], a matter that has led to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in both Cairo and al-Arish reaching a deadlock that risks destroying the credibility of the peace process.

The PLO, while stressing its eagerness to see a faithful and meticulous carrying out of the agreement in time, and in accordance with its defined timetables, warns that the Israeli practices and policies, which deserve strong denunciation and condemnation, require the immediate intervention of the two co-sponsors of the peace process, and of the international community, in order to guarantee the carrying out of the agreement and international protection for our people, if it is wanted that the agreement is carried out and succeeds. The continuation of the Israeli practices of impeding the progress and poisoning the climates favorable for progress casts shadows of doubt over the credibility and commitments of the Israeli Government. The PLO cannot in any way accept that the killing campaigns continue against our activists, heroes, and the masses of our people.

At its meetings, the leadership also studied the results of the negotiations in various domains, and discussed ways of preparing for the setting up of a Palestinian national authority, and strengthening the Palestinian preparedness for the next stage.

'Abbas, 'Abd-Rabbuh Boycott PLO Meeting

NC0212184393 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Three of Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's closest associates boycotted a PLO Executive Committee meeting held in Tunis today. The three are PLO spokesman Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Sulayman al-Najjab, head of the Media Department; and Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, who personally signed the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on 13 September in Washington on behalf of the organization.

No 'Arafat Return While Israel Controls Borders

NC0212162193 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] PLO officials said today that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will not return to Jericho if Israel continues to control the crossing points between Jordan and the occupied West Bank. 'Arafat had been due to return to Jericho either in January or February 1994.

In other news, an official PLO statement issued after the Palestinian president's meetings with PLO leaders in Tunis last night said that the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians over ways to implement the autonomy agreement have reached a deadlock.

The statement urged the United States to intervene to guarantee Israel's adherence to the commitments it made in the agreement.

INA: 'Arafat To Meet King, Christopher in Amman

JN0312093793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Amman, 3 Dec (INA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will visit Jordan next week to meet with Jordan's King Husayn. Informed Palestinian source said in Amman last night that, during his stay in the Jordanian capital, 'Arafat will meet with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher who will visit Jordan on Monday within a regional tour.

The Palestinian source noted that a PLO Executive Committee delegation would accompany 'Arafat on this visit to hold high-level Palestinian-Jordanian talks and to conclude a number of agreements that will organize future relations between the two sides in various fields.

'Abd-al-Shafi: Israel Responsible for Violence

TA0212152393 Jerusalem AL-TALI'AH in Arabic 2 Dec 93 p 1

[By Mustafa al-Barbar]

[Text] Gaza—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, has stressed that Israel bears the responsibility for the escalating violence in the occupied territories, particularly in the Gaza Strip over the past few days. 'Abd-al-Shafi added that the Israeli policy of confronting the Palestinian masses who wish to express their feelings, Israel's use of excessive force, its pursuit of wanted men, the ensuing tragic results, and the fall of martyrs have created a climate of tension and anxiety.

'Abd-al-Shafi said that the impasse in the current talks has increased tension and has called the future of the peace process into question. This process cannot continue except on the basis of justice and by granting the Palestinian people their legitimate national rights.

'Abd-al-Shafi said that Israel should abandon the policy of resorting to force and display flexibility with regard to the credibility of the peace process. This includes the release of thousands of prisoners and allowing the return of deportees. He emphasized that any steps in this direction would help calm the situation.

Delegate Views PLO Handling of Talks, Unity

TA0212201893 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 1 Dec 93 pp 1, 7

[Interview with Dr. Ghassan al-Khatib, senior Palestinian People's Party official and member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] [AL-NAHAR] Has the People's Party adopted a new policy of working within the PLO?

[Al-Khatib] It is not a new policy, but a continuation and intensification of the same position which we began to stress since the PLO's decision to sign the declaration of principles. That position seeks to develop political performance so that it would be compatible with the challenges posed by the accord. Specifically, there is a need for collective instead of individual decisions, for placing the right persons in the proper positions instead of choosing them on a partisan basis, and finally for a basic system that arranges the relationships of the various agencies that will bear the responsibility in the coming stage.

We raised these points and they were accepted, but what is being practiced is totally the opposite. We have been insisting on these demands since the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. Therefore, we decided not to participate in the meetings scheduled for these days, because decisions will be adopted but the officials will act to the contrary.

Our participation in these meetings will be a cover for the behavior of officials so that they will do what they want regardless of the decisions adopted by the conferees.

[AL-NAHAR] Have any specific and intentional violations been committed by the PLO leadership against the People's Party?

[Al-Khatib] In my view, no intentional act has been carried out by the PLO leadership against the People's Party, but the problem is that the PLO institutions themselves have violated the decisionmaking mechanism and the translation of decisions into reality.

[AL-NAHAR] What will be the People's Party role if the PLO leadership keeps pursuing the same policy in the future?

[Al-Khatib] We are cooperating with a large number of prominent political figures inside and outside to pressure the PLO leadership to rectify its decisionmaking approach and method. We are doing this in different ways, most important of which was the memorandum presented to the PLO leadership.

There is also cooperation with many forces in a bid to develop some sort of opposition from among the cadres supporting the agreement. Further steps will be taken in the future. Follow-up committees have been set up in Amman on this issue.

[AL-NAHAR] Is there coordination with the parties opposed to the agreement?

[Al-Khatib] We have repeatedly called on the opposition to deal with events realistically, adopt its positions from the premise that the agreement has become a reality regardless of supporters or opponents, work from within the PLO's official institutions, and remedy the political and organizational deterioration in the PLO. In my opinion, this is the best way to save the situation that we are experiencing now. The opposition's stance has nothing new, but we are continuing to maintain contact with them. A high-level meeting was held a week ago on this issue.

[AL-NAHAR] How do you see the future of Palestinian national unity in light of these conflicts and differences?

[Al-Khatib] In my assessment the national unity situation is extremely difficult and will be even more difficult in the future if matters continue in the same vein. I believe this crisis can be resolved if the Palestinian leadership and the other parties are prepared to work together in democratic institutions founded on a constitutional basis and in elections. If we succeed in achieving this goal, we will restore and elevate national unity. If we fail, the situation will become worse.

[AL-NAHAR] How do you see the future of the talks in Taba and Cairo?

[Al-Khatib] We are not being officially informed of the details of the current talks. Therefore, it is difficult to comment on them. In my view, the Israelis are exploiting the Palestinian position's confusion and weakness and are hardening their positions.

[AL-NAHAR] Some say that the talks in their present form and the Gaza-Jericho accord will lead the Palestinian people to a catastrophe or setback. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Khatib] In my view, this will depend on how the Palestinian side handles the talks and on the assumption of authority in the future. If we act as efficiently as we should, this accord will become a principal ingredient in building national independence. If we act in the wrong way and make mistakes, the accord will lead us to hell.

Group Claims Israeli Officer Held Prisoner

JN0312092093 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0900 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] A hitherto unknown Palestinian organization says it holds an Israeli officer prisoner and threatens to kill him.

An international news agency in Beirut has received a statement signed by the Secret Organization for Guarding Jerusalem [al-munazzamah al-sirriyah lihirasat al-quds] stating it holds captive in the occupied territories an Israeli Army officer named (Msali). The organization threatens to kill him within 48 hours if Israel does not admit the existence of this officer. As yet, there has been no reaction in Israel to this statement.

Organization Makes Demands

NC0312115293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] No Israeli reaction has yet been made to the statement issued by a new Palestinian organization calling itself the Secret Organization for Guarding Jerusalem.

The office of an international news agency in Beirut has received a statement in which this organization asserts that it is detaining an Israeli Army officer. It demands the release of Palestinian and Lebanese detainees held in Israeli jails.

The statement was accompanied by a color photograph of the detained officer and a threat to kill the prisoner within 48 hours unless Israel acknowledges that he is being held.

Lebanese Paper Cited on Captive

NC0312121993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1100 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] A hitherto unknown Al-Quds Guards Group [majmu'at hurras al-quds] has claimed responsibility for an attack against the Israeli Army command in Nazareth. A number of Zionist officers were killed and one Zionist officer was captured in the attack. The group's first statement, published in the Beirut newspaper AL-LIWA', says: In retaliation for Zionist attacks and oppressive acts against the Palestinian people, and in response to 'Arafat's treasonous policy, fighters of the Al-Quds Guards Group attacked the Zionist entity's command in Nazareth. The statement, accompanied by a photograph of the captured Zionist officer, says that the operation was carried out in 18 April [as heard] and that the delay in announcing it was meant to protect the life of the fighters and the Zionist captive. The group stressed that it will not release the Zionist officer unless the Zionist entity releases all Palestinian, Lebanese, and other Arab prisoners.

Palestinian Envoy's Joining 'Opposition' Denied

JN0312085093 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 3 Dec 93 p 28

[Text] Amman—An information officer at the Palestine Embassy in Amman yesterday, Thursday, categorically denied what the Qatari newspaper AL-RAYAH published yesterday, 2 December 1993, that al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, state of Palestine ambassador to Jordan, has joined what it calls "Palestinian opposition."

The source stressed that al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim still holds his job as ambassador of the state of Palestine to Jordan. The only reason he is not in Amman now is because he is attending the Palestinian leadership's meetings in Tunis, the source added.

PLO Security Officers Begin Training for Duty

NC0212213993 Paris AFP in English 2030 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, Dec 2 (AFP)—Some 500 Palestinian security officers and officials on Thursday [2 December] began a two-week training course here as a prelude to formation of the Palestinian police force in the occupied territories, Palestinian sources said.

The training will eventually involve about 700 mid-level Palestinian officials who come under the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) and who hail from various PLO departments.

About 500 Palestinians gathered Thursday in a stadium from where they were taken to a Tunisian police academy in a northern suburb of the capital.

They are to submit to daily sessions of physical and psychological training before the group—the first of its kind—is taken to assembly points in Egypt and Jordan.

The measure comes following meetings of the Palestinian leadership to discuss the difficulties facing the Israeli-PLO talks underway in Egypt.

Barring the failure of these negotiations on implementation of the limited self-rule accord in the Gaza Strip and Jericho signed September 13 in Washington, the Palestinian contingent will leave Tunis in mid-December.

A boat will pick up them up along with other PLA personnel based in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya before heading for Egypt or Jordan.

Two vessels have been chartered for the trip but no exact date has been set for their departure.

In mid-November Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasir 'Arafat ordered PLA troops based in Algeria, Libya, Sudan, Iraq and Yemen to assemble in Egypt and Jordan where the future Palestinian police force is to take shape.

General Nasir Yusuf, a member of the central committee of Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction who was appointed Palestinian police chief, this week briefed the leadership here on preparations for the PLA's conversion into a security force.

But the gathering of his forces and their entry into Gaza and Jericho still hinge on the implementation of the accord which takes effect on December 13 as well as on agreements with Egypt and Jordan.

Up to 6,000 Palestinian police will be deployed in the first stage of autonomy, the "brigadier-general" sent to the Gaza Strip to ensure a smooth takeover told AFP on Wednesday.

From next week 500 Gazans who served in the Israeli police or trained as police before the uprising in the occupied territories began in December 1987 will take a crash refresher course.

Under the Israel-PLO autonomy agreement the army is to start a four-month withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho by December 13. But negotiations have so far failed to produce a withdrawal plan.

PFLP Official Assails Deployment

TA0212160093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 2 Dec 93 pp 1, 14

[Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—A prominent official in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has criticized the plan to set up a Palestinian police force in Gaza and Jericho within framework of the self-rule accord.

'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the Political Bureau of the PFLP led by Dr. George Habash, said that "the arrival of Palestinian police in the occupied territories under the current situation is tantamount to placing the cart before the horse."

He added: The entry of Palestinian police into the occupied territories might provide a solution, but this will not serve Palestinian national goals as much as special security arrangements.

On the method in which the PFLP—a major PLO faction—will deal with the planned police force, Malluh said: In the PFLP we have determined our stance, which is epitomized by our right to continue the struggle against the occupation and against all forms of its political, settlement, and military presence on the occupied territories, including in the Gaza and Jericho areas. This is the legitimate right of all people living under occupation, just like our people.

Malluh, a PLO Executive Committee member who submitted his resignation in protest at the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles, added: We hope that the Palestinian police force will not turn into a tool of political suppression acting on behalf of the occupation forces.

He added that in such a case, the police and the political officials supervising them will be implementing the occupation's policy rather than ensuring and protecting the safety of Palestinian residents.

Fatah Sources Deny Intent To Renew Intifadah

TA0212181693 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report]

[Text] A statement signed by Fatah was distributed this morning in Ramallah and Jerusalem. The statement called on the residents of the territories to resume the intifadah because, it claimed, Israel had reneged on the Israeli-Palestinian agreement. Reliable Fatah sources in the West Bank told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that they had no knowledge of this statement and that Fatah cadres were still adhering to the Palestinian leadership's orders to cease acts of violence.

Fatah Fugitives To Return to Gaza 17 Dec

TA0212152793 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 2 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Gaza—Informed Palestinian sources have said that Fatah fugitives belonging to Rafiq al-Salimi group, the Black Panthers, and Fatah Hawks are arriving in Egypt in order to return to the Gaza Strip on 17 December. The sources stressed that the fugitives will cross into the Strip through the Rafah crossing point and that a tent camp has been set up in Rafah on the Egyptian side to welcome them before they enter the Strip.

Al-Rantisi on Gaza Violence

JN0212205493 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1722 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Marj al-Zuhur—Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the struggler deportees stranded in Marj al-Zuhur, who, God willing, will be repatriated, has affirmed that the repatriation of some 200 deportees in Marj al-Zuhur will take place on schedule; that is, on 17 December.

In a statement today, Dr. al-Rantisi added that the deportees will resume the duties they performed before their deportation; that is, they will go back to their work at educational, social, health, charity, and religious institutions.

With respect to the explosive situation in the inflamed Gaza Strip, Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi said that recent incidents there constitute a true referendum, showing that the Palestinian people have chosen to pursue the intifadah rather than negotiations. For, they have not stepped up their intifadah to avenge the killing of 'Imad 'Aql [commander of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam battalions in Gaza Strip] per se, but rather to uphold the resistance phenomenon.

In his statement, Dr. al-Rantisi noted that the Fatah Hawks, who refuse to lay down arms, carried out resistance operations in the past. Consequently, this group is concerned about the homeland, and is unwilling to abandon it. He added: The agreement concluded in Washington does not enjoy the support of the Palestinian people; it enjoys the support of a single party which is a minority among the Palestinians. He noted that Palestinian ranks will remain cohesive, and that the majority of the Palestinians will mobilize themselves in a single trench to oppose the agreement that consecrates and legitimizes occupation.

Concluding his statement, Dr. al-Rantisi said: I have always believed that the intifadah is a popular manifestation of opposition to the occupation. Hence, it will continue as long as the occupation is maintained.

Algeria

Spanish Citizen Assassinated 2 Dec

LD0212232793 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Official sources today announced that a Spanish citizen, Manuel Lopez Bailen, who was not a resident in Algeria, was assassinated this afternoon. The crime took place on trunk road no. 62 in the El Henancha area between the cities of Khemis Miliana and Berrouaghia.

The victim, who was in his private car with Spanish license plates, was heading from Oran to Annaba with two Algerian couples. The Algerians were released after they had been ill-treated.

Following the incident, Interior Minister Salim Saadi received the Spanish Embassy's press officer, Mrs. Elmundina Mezerza, and conveyed his condolences to her on behalf of the government. He also asked her to convey the government's condolences to the victim's family.

He indicated that the campaign of fear, which some elements are trying to pursue against foreigners, is condemned to failure.

Five Sentenced to Die Despite Suspended Executions

LD0212205693 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] In Algeria, the Higher State Council has announced the suspension of executions of Islamic fundamentalists sentenced to death, but that does not prevent the courts from continuing to hand down death sentences. The Algiers Special Court has passed death sentences against five Islamic fundamentalists, in their absence.

MDA Calls For Inclusion of FIS in Dialogue

LD0212235193 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] In addition to its usual activities, the Movement for Democracy in Algeria [MDA] this evening held a general meeting in Ibn Khaldoun hall [in Algiers] to justify its decision to freeze its participation in the national dialogue. More details with Bachir Hdibal:

[Hdibal] The general meeting was hosted this evening by MDA Secretary-General Khaled Bensmail and Dr. Abdelkhalek Seddiki, the official in charge of the movement's delegation in the west of the country. [passage omitted]

According to the MDA, we must therefore concentrate on national reconciliation by involving all the political organizations. With regard to the reasons behind the MDA's decision to suspend its participation in the dialogue, the movement's secretary-general, Khaled Bensmail, had this to say:

[Begin Bensmail recording] I must repeat this: We have not withdrawn from the dialogue; we are still partners in this dialogue. Our demand was to involve all sides, without any exception. We also talked about political issues. We talked about a political solution and when we moved to technical points, we realized that we are not qualified to talk about this because as far as we are concerned the main problem is finding a solution to the political crisis. No solution has been found yet for the political crisis. We have been given a pledge and we have taken note of this pledge but we are a political party and we cannot operate on pledges. We operate on deeds and we look at what is happening in the country. [end recording]

As for the measures that could solve the crisis, Mr. Bensmail said:

[Begin Bensmail recording] In any case, the solution of the present crisis requires in our view the involvement of all parties concerned, including the banned party, that is, the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS]. This is the solution we can envision. In any case, this was our proposal. We also said that this [National Dialogue] Commission could carry out the tasks of the Higher State Council and continue its work. We have no problem with that. [end recording] [passage omitted]

HAMAS Urges Return to 'Constitutional Legitimacy'

LD0212233693 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Cheikh Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of HAMAS, attended a meeting of womens representatives, attended by his movement, Ennahda, the Party for Algerian Renewal, the Union of Algerian Students, and the Free Student Union.

Cheikh Mahfoud Nahnah, leader of HAMAS, said that his movement will not withdraw from the [national] dialogue and said among other things: If some want to use the kidnapping of Cheikh Bouslimani as a means to force HAMAS to suspend its participation in the national dialogue, they are totally mistaken. Nahnah added: It is everybody's responsibility, despite the diversity of our trends and ideas, to find a solution to the stifling crisis which the country is going through. We must join efforts to ward off the danger of the phoney democrats and the phoney Islamists.

After the conference, the HAMAS movement sent a statement to the Higher State Council demanding a return to constitutional legitimacy, the release of prisoners of conscience, and the closure of [detention] camps in order to prepare the ground for a successful national conference.

Boumedienist Leader Supports Dialogue

LD0212170093 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] The leader of the Boumedienist Islamic Party, Mohamed Saadi, has announced that dialogue is the only way to get the country out of its current crisis. He made this announcement at a rally held today in Oran, where he said:

[Begin Saadi recording] The Boumedienist Islamic National Front says yes to dialogue and no to axes and dialogue for the sake of dialogue. This means that we will work hard in order to arrive at the national conference by means of dialogue, since we consider dialogue to be a civilized act in all world civilizations.

We will work along with the Constitutional National Union bloc to draw together all the national currents that believe in dialogue as a means and a goal in order to arrive at the national conference. We say that the national conference must be sovereign, on the basis that it is a conference of national consensus to get the country out of the impasse in which it finds itself.

It is our view that Algeria can come out of its impasse if there are people who understand the situation and work with the principle of making major concessions. It is required of all of us, as parties, as prominent figures, and as organizations that we should give up our political point of reference and our personal quest for leadership. We also say in this regard that no political persuasion must be excluded. [end recording]

FFS Holds National Council Session

LD0212150893 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The Socialist Forces Front [FFS] today held an ordinary session of its extended National Council. This session comes a few days after the FFS announced that it was suspending its participation in the national dialogue to protest the authorities' failure to respond to its demands regarding the normalization of the political situation in the country. The details are given in a dispatch from our correspondent Noureddine Moussadek.

[Moussadek] Indeed Djamila, between the suspension of its participation in the dialogue and maintaining its contacts with the National Dialogue Commission, the FFS at its extended council being convened today is stressing that the National Dialogue Commission has entered into a battle of platforms or proposals, and that the dialogue with the Dialogue Commission has ended, at least in the view of the FFS. According to the FFS, the Dialogue Commission has bypassed it and other parties for other organizations and associations.

Despite this, the FFS renewed its demands for the establishment of a structure for the expected transitional period, the improvement and opening up of the political arena and atmosphere, the issuing of a public statement on the conditions of detainees, and opening up the media. In one prominent contributions, a participant censured the press for tracing the FFS stance regarding its demands or opposition back to the dissolved FIS [Islamic Salvation Front], and the FFS stance in its demand for democracy back to the RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy]. [passage omitted]

Other topics discussed by the FFS included the so-called strategy of skirting the issue, by which the media focuses exclusively on the security aspect as part of a plan by a concerned body to make the dialogue fail. Also in the opinion of the FFS, the Higher State Council is working to preserve itself in a different form.

FFS officials demanded to enter into what they called the political process of power, since in the view of the FFS this process is working on three scenarios, the most likely of which is the scenario in which contact between the authorities and the FIS is restored at the expense of the democrats. [passage omitted]

Former Premier Ghozali Dismissed as Envoy to France

LD0212220093 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] On the subject of Algeria, Hocine Djoudi has been appointed as ambassador to France. He thus replaces Sid Ahmed Ghozali, who has been dismissed. Ghozali's appointment in July 1992 could be perceived at the time as being a measure whereby Algiers intended to keep him outside the political sphere, since he became ambassador after having been obliged to leave his post as prime minister. Farida Ayari sketches the picture of Sid Ahmed Ghozali for us:

[Ayari] [passage omitted] Sid Ahmed Ghozali is known for his pragmatism and his frankness—it is no doubt this latter quality that has brought him his dismissal today. In fact, a few months ago, during a public rally in Paris, Sid Ahmed Ghozali said that 90 percent of Algerians do not want the current regime.

Egypt

Cabinet Denounces Assassination Attempt on Sidqi

NC0212153793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] In a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi today, the cabinet denounced the sinful attempt against the life of Dr. Sidqi. It also denounced the method used by the terrorists, who deliberately placed a high-explosive device between two schools for children, without regard for religion or conscience. The cabinet stressed that these terrorist attempts, which aim to undermine Egypt's stability, will be comprehensively confronted.

Cabinet Affairs Minister Ahmad Radwan Mansur, who made these remarks, added that the government will confront these outlaws with all available means and that the police, supported by the citizens, are capable, God willing, of crushing and defeating terrorism.

Mansur said the cabinet reviewed a report by Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi on the terrorist attempt against Dr. 'Atif Sidqi. In his report, al-Alfi said the internal security situation has been reexamined and that the security commands in the governorates have been strengthened, the measures to secure to public utilities have been augmented, the central security forces have been improved, and some negative conditions in some prisons have been eliminated. He noted that large quantities of weapons and devices used in terrorist operations have been seized.

Al-Alfi said the Interior Ministry has complete information about terrorist organizations at home and abroad. He also reviewed the criminal laboratory's report on the incident and the security strategy to confront terrorism and apprehend the culprits.

In his report, al-Alfi praised the cooperation between the people and the police, which has led to positive results, including the early rejection and abortion of terrorist plans. He also noted there has been coordination with security departments in friendly states to monitor the activities of fugitive terrorist leaders.

Al-Alfi affirmed that there is great confidence that the problem of terrorism will be resolved in favor of the homeland, the citizens, and the economic march.

The cabinet affirmed its full moral and material support for the Interior Ministry's departments, which are making great efforts to preserve security.

The cabinet then discussed a foreign policy report submitted by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who noted that a limited African summit will be held in Cairo next week. The summit will discuss the mechanism for resolving African disputes and the formation of an African peacekeeping force in Africa. Musa also noted that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's upcoming tour of the region is aimed at promoting work on the Syrian-Israeli track and confronting the obstacles facing the Palestinian-Israeli track. Musa also reviewed the outcome of the economy minister's visit to Bahrain. During the visit it was agreed to set up an Egyptian trade center to market Egyptian products in Bahrain. It was also agreed to implement an executive program for cultural cooperation between Egypt and Bahrain.

In his report, Musa reviewed the outcome of Egypt's participation in the recent Rome meetings of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Cabinet Approves Rewards for Leads on Terrorists

NC0212154193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1436 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA)—The cabinet has decided to grant a monetary reward to any citizen who leads authorities to a terrorist den or provides information that assists in the arrests of terrorist elements. The reward will be paid only if the information proves to be accurate. This decision followed a discussion of the interior minister's request in this regard at today's cabinet meeting.

Muslim Brotherhood Denounces Attack on Sidqi

NC0212212093 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 27 Nov 93 p 1

[Text] The Muslim Brotherhood group issued a statement yesterday denouncing the terrorist attack on Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi. Muhammad Hamid Abu-al-Nasr, general guide of the Muslim Brotherhood, expressed regret over the incident, which happened near two schools crowded with young pupils. He described the incident as a criminal act defying every law and logic and lacking any human feeling.

Chief Editor Discusses Attack on Sidqi, Islamists

NC0312090493 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 3

[Article by Chief Editor Mahmud al-Maraghi: "At the Scene of the Painful Incident: Technically, 'Atif Sidqi Was Hit; Actually, Shayma' Died. The Kill-and-Rule Group and a Question on the Consequences of al-Sadat's Killing"]

[Text] When a major incident occurs like that involving the prime minister last Thursday, security questions precede political ones. You get questions like: Who did it? How? Why?

When the perpetrator remains unknown, the question is posed: Who has a motive?

All this was raised in connection with the incident involving Dr. 'Atif Sidqi.

After the initial reports, the first thing I did was to visit the scene. I was thunderstruck. The damaged vehicles stood right in front of the school as if the explosives were meant not for the prime minister, but for the schoolchildren. I remembered the Bahr al-Baqar incident when an Israeli plane raided an elementary school during the war of attrition [1969—1970]. That horrific scene came back to my mind: The ceilings had collapsed until they stuck to the floors, the children who had survived were filling the halls of a nearby hospital with their moans, and many innocents were martyred, enough to fill one or two classrooms.

I remembered this while trying to answer the uncertain question "Who Did it?" Police sources say they have determined the general sphere in which the culprit might operate. This agrees with the general tenor of several earlier incidents and the statements made by the leaders of this stream.

According to initial indications, "the Vanguards of Conquest" group is the suspect. Are we against a real, political organization? Are we faced by a group aiming to establish an Islamic state that would spread justice and represent the poor, as one of their men, Ayman al-Zawahiri, declared on the pages of AL- 'ARABI last week. Is it a group that seeks to change society to raise it?

In his interview, al-Zawahiri said they do not target innocents, but ask such innocents to avoid "operational areas." These are the operational areas: A school, a crowded street. What kind of advice is their leader giving? What falsehood and disregard for life is this?

I return to the objectives of the violent groups. Ayman al-Zawahiri said they enjoy popular support. I ask: What support do they feel they now have when all of Egypt is mourning Shayma' [the schoolgirl killed during the attempt on the prime minister's life]. All Egypt now fears the insane bombs that might hit a schoolchild, an employee in his office, or a pedestrian on his way to the mosque. What support, what popularity?

A simple analysis of events shows we are facing groups that are not popular; their violent work keeps their numbers few and their influence limited. But popularity should mean that a group can form a public organization that operates legally and contests general elections regardless of any reservations it might have about the method of elections.

Those who seek change must pursue peaceful, democratic methods. Al-Sadat was assassinated, but Egypt changed little. Power was transferred in a constitutional manner, not by a coup d'etat at least.

Violence does not create change. Assassinating the prime minister does nothing but create the opportunity for further restrictions on freedom. One example is Algeria, where executions are increasing, newspapers and other periodicals have been closed, and everything has fallen within the spheres of emergency and exception.

That's what bullets do. If we were facing a really popular organization, it would not have needed to carry out such operations.

What are we facing?

We state: Violence breeds violence.

We state further: Poverty, unemployment, and corruption generate resentment. Resentment produces extremists.

All this is true, but it is not the complete diagnosis.

Yes, we demand comprehensive reform. We demand a different internal and foreign policy. We demand employment opportunities for the unemployed. We demand shelter, housing, and real opportunities for health care and education for every citizen. But we also know that the way to get there is very clear.

First, we need to convince the public of what we want and gain popular support for what we say.

Second, we need to start a large-scale political battle with these masses through democratic means only: the party, the newspaper, the conference, the parliament, peaceful protest, and all the other known methods of action.

This is the way to change. So how can they prove to the broad masses that they are serious about the programs they present and that they chose the correct methods?

We need to distinguish between the source from which they recruit—the desperate, the rejectionist, and the disgruntled—and the people who guide and plan such action and set out the policy of kill and rule.

We are facing two teams, not one. The comprehensive reform we demand is to dry up the sources from which the youth who are being hurled into the fire under the pretext of reform, change, and the Islamic state come.

I believe that security in such cases precedes politics, but politics necessarily imposes itself and is closely connected with security, since there is no option.

The security issue of who stands to benefit leads us to a political result. Let us view the Arab arena: clashes in Algeria, Sudan, Egypt, and Palestine; collapse in Somalia; paralysis in Iraq; fear in the Gulf; siege on Libya; and political and economic problems everywhere. The beneficiary here is clear: It is Israel, which wants to enter the Arab arena in its weakest form. Here we have set forth all the factors of weakness. What joint interests could the Islamists and Israel have in common?

We hold the Islamists above such links. But I believe this will be the result anyway. I also believe that the Islamists are not all the same, not even part of the same organization. Indeed, differences among them are larger than differences between their extremist organizations and the political organizations that do not uphold the same slogans.

The real Islamists are innocent of what is happening. Their stance on Israel is clear. The time has come for us to call them into the arena of dialogue, which we intend to hold on a national level. At the same time, the violent groups are a different issue. There are limits that the Islamists themselves need to set before we do.

The spirit of Shayma', the martyr of Manshiyat al-Bakri, makes this demand. Security experts say that God has been merciful toward Egypt. Had the explosive device been large, as the initial estimates had it, whole buildings in the area would have collapsed. Had the prime minister not been in an armored car he would have been a sure hit. Experts say: Technically, the prime minister was at the center of the explosion, but circumstances rescued him.

I write this article with the file still open—the file of investigation and the file of the political cause, which everyone must confront.

Kill and rule is a destructive slogan. All Egypt knows that.

Interior Minister on Police Measures, Human Rights

NC0212171893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1435 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 2 Dec (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stated that in all their security measures, the Ministry's agencies are committed to legitimacy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and freedom out of the belief that man's freedom is guaranteed by divine laws.

At his meeting today with Muhammad Fa'iq, secretary general of the Arab Human Rights Organization [AHRO], the interior minister called on human rights organizations to heed the rights of terrorism's victims. Terrorism, he noted, does not distinguish between a security man, child, or woman; it fires on people at random and without conscience or religious or moral restraint.

He said the police authorities depend on scientific methods and avoid excesses. He added that his standing instructions to the police stipulate that confrontation should be limited to those who violate the law and be adequate to frustrate any criminal attempts. They also call for imposing security control and taking the initiative in dealing with terrorism firmly and decisively.

He said that in implementing its policy of respecting human rights and freedom, the Interior Ministry immediately investigates any complaints from the public about any excesses with the knowledge of the pertinent control agencies.

He said the Egyptian people's culture and originality throughout history affirm that the Egyptian people's rights and freedoms deserve respect. They have adopted heroic stances in preserving their security and stability against the dangers and threats facing them. He remarked that the police agencies seek to secure popular support for their action.

The AHRO secretary general praised the Egyptian Interior Ministry's facilities for the meeting of the AHRO General Assembly in Cairo, the organization's first meeting in Egypt for many years. He noted that the organization failed to find another venue to hold its constituent conference in the Arab countries. He said the Egyptian Interior Ministry's facilities reflect its interest in and emphasis on human rights.

He added that the Interior Ministry is considering an advanced UN study curriculum to be given to Police Academy students in addition to the academy's programs dealing with international agreements to protect human rights.

The UN secretary general's representative for human rights visited the Police Academy and found positive cooperation from the Interior Ministry in respect of human rights in Egypt.

Chief Editor Questioned Over al-Jihad Interview

NC0212213893 Cairo AL-'ARABI in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 3

[Text] The interview that AL-'ARABI published with Ayman al- Zawahiri, one of the al-Jihad Organization leaders, has caused extensive reaction. Some international news agencies carried al-Zawahiri's remarks and referred to them in subsequent coverage of the attack on the prime minister. The day before yesterday the interior minister attacked AL-'ARABI for publishing the interview. The public prosecution, based on an instruction by the interior minister, questioned the paper's chief editor about the interview in which al-Zawahiri noted that he was a party to the attempt to assassinate the interior minister and that such operations would continue.

In the investigation supervised by Attorney General 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf-al-Din and conducted by Chief Prosecutor 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Halawani, the newspaper was charged with spreading the ideas of an illegal extremist group that calls for suspending the Constitution and the law, attacking public rights, influencing the operation of public authorities, undermining social peace, and using terrorism as a means to achieve its objectives.

The chief editor was questioned for two hours. The session was attended by Aminah Shafiq and Muhammad 'Abd-al-Qaddus on behalf of the Journalists Association. It was also attended by Samih 'Ashur, a member of the Lawyers Association Council. The chief editor denied the charge and said that what was published cannot be understood without referring to the general policy of the Nasirite Party, which publishes the paper and dictates the paper's policy line, which opposes the use of force.

The chief editor added that the publication of such interviews is designed to tackle a phenomenon and fulfill a basic professional duty, which is the right of the reader to learn and be informed of events. You can't disregard events that have been proven to be true. He added that what was published does not, in general, go beyond what judicial investigations have revealed, courts and security services have announced, and the press has published. Chief Editor Mahmud al-Maraghi said the paper explained its position at the beginning of the interview and attacked the logic on the basis of which the al-Jihad Organization was established—the method of kill and rule.

'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Halawani will resume the investigation tomorrow. REUTERS news agency reported yesterday that the interior minister has issued an order banning the publication of interviews with hardliners and subjecting violators to punishment. REUTERS yesterday carried several dispatches about the investigation involving AL-'ARABI.

Musa Sees 'Positive Sign' in Somali Talks

NC0312105193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0922 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 3 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that the participation of the Somali leaders, notably Ali Mahdi Mohamed, Mohamed Farah Aidid, Morgan [Mohamed Siad Hersi], and al-Bishr [name as received], in the current peace talks in Addis Ababa is "a positive sign" toward reconciliation among these leaders and national reconciliation for the sake of security and stability in Somalia.

In a statement today, the foreign minister said Egypt supports unification of all efforts to achieve security, stability, and national reconciliation in Somalia.

It should be noted that National Somali Alliance leader Mohamed Farah Aidid unexpectedly arrived in Addis Ababa yesterday to attend talks with other Somali faction leaders, including Interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed.

Mubarak To Give 'Important' Speech on 7 Dec

NC0312081793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak will deliver an important political speech at the opening of the African minisummit in Cairo on Tuesday [7 December]. He will discuss Egypt's position on African issues and its efforts to achieve peace and stability on the African continent. OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim, who is scheduled to arrive in Cairo Sunday, will also address the opening session. The agenda will then be approved. The minisummit will be attended by the heads of Egypt, Ethiopia, Angola, Djibouti, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Niger, and Zimbabwe. It will also be attended by the prime minister of Tunisia and the foreign minister of Senegal.

Official sources said the conferees will officially announce the launching of the central organization for solving and administering African conflicts by peaceful means. They will also discuss current African issues and developments in Somalia, Liberia, Angola, Burundi, and South Africa.

State Concludes First Privatization Deal

NC0212212493 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 28 Nov 93 p 1

[Text] Dr. 'Atif 'Ubayd, minister of the business sector, has said that the state has concluded its first deal as part of its privatization program. The Al-Nasr Bottling Company was sold to the Coca Cola Company and Egyptian and Arab investors, he added.

Dr. 'Ubayd noted that the buyers agreed to pay 317.5 million Egyptian pounds in return for buying all the shares of the company, which has a license from Coca Cola International. 'Ubayd said he expects another deal to be concluded this week to privatize the Egyptian Bottling Company, which operates under license from Pepsi Cola. 'Ubayd expects Egypt to achieve its goals of selling state-owned assets, which are worth 2.3 billion pounds, by next December and of selling other assets worth 9 billion more by next June [dates as published].

'Ubayd declared that the government has also started serious negotiations to sell the Cairo Sheraton Hotel and a group of other hotels on the privatization list. He noted that the buyers of the Al-Nasr Bottling Company agreed to sell 10 percent of the company's shares to its employees and to sell 20 percent of the shares to the public through the Stock Exchange. He added that the buyers had also agreed to retain the company's employees.

Libya

Foreign Minister: UN Resolution Ends Dialogue

NC0112163693 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 2

[Report by Muhammad Matar]

[Text] Libyan Foreign Minister 'Umar al-Muntasir has stated that Security Council Resolution 833, which tightened the sanctions against Libya, has brought the Libyan-Western crisis to a dead end and closed the door to dialogue and to the complete flexibility that Libya has shown in handling the crisis.

In exclusive statements to AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I, al-Muntasir said that escalating the situation will not force Libya to change its position and that Tripoli asserts that negotiations are the ideal way to resolve such crises. He noted that Libya has made the major concession, namely its agreement to allow its two citizens—who are accused of blowing up the American plane—to be tried in a third country other than the United States and Britain, even though this conflicts with Libyan law.

He said that it is neither legal nor fair to imprison an entire population on the basis of an unresolved issue and mere suspicions. He added that there is no contradiction between Libya's official stand and that of the two defendants' defense panel, because the two cases are different. The first concerns the state, and the second concerns individuals. He added: As a state, we have two suspects. The common denominator is that they are both Libyan citizens. Each individual is responsible for any crime he commits, and the state has nothing to do with it. We have said that we will not object if the two suspects decide to surrender to the judiciary.

Answering a question about whether Libya relied on Russia's position on the Security Council or whether it offered money to Moscow in return for its vetoing the resolution on tightening the sanctions, al-Muntasir said:

We did not rely on Russia's position for long because the positions that states take are dictated by their interests.

We are relying on our own position, which is based on principles and justice. It is absolutely not true that we offered Russia any money, but we know that the United States succeeded in containing Russia by including it on the committee that formulated the recent resolution. It continued to exert pressure on Moscow to support the resolution. I do not believe that we can pay off Russia's debts now, because Resolution 833 means that Libyan assets are frozen.

The Libyan foreign minister denied reaching an agreement on extraditing the two defendants with the United States while he was in New York to attend the UN General Assembly session. He said: We asked UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali to form a political-legal committee to come to Tripoli to convince the defendants to go to stand trial. There has been a misunderstanding on the other side's part because it insists on setting a date for the extradition. I emphasized to the UN secretary general that we cannot set the date for extradition.

On cooperation between Libya and Egypt, he said: Experience has shown that Egyptian-Libyan cooperation is undoubtedly in the interest of the entire Arab homeland. Relations between the two countries are the best they can be. There is constant coordination and cooperation between Mubarak and al-Qadhdhafi on all issues. Egypt is seeking to open every channel that will lead to an honorable solution of the crisis. Egypt has made contacts with the Security Council and the United Nations to seek a solution. We know that Egypt's role is fundamental and vital. There has been a slackening in some of the joint projects as a result of the siege imposed on Libya.

Daily Criticizes Arab League Support for Sanctions

LD0212160193 Tripoli JANA in English 1501 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli (al-Kanun 2) [2 December] JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The AL ZAHF AL AKHDAR newspaper said that it is not in the interests of the countries of the European Community for the United States, Britain and France to reduce commercial contact with Libya. Such a decision means that European interests will be sacrificed but the European countries took this decision because the crisis is between Libya and a fellow Western country. Even the Arab countries have not stood by Libya and they have not adopted any decisions against the Western countries.

In its special edition to mark the day when the latest sanctions adopted by the Security Council come into effect against the Great Jamahiriyah, AL ZAHF AL AKHDAR featured an article under the heading 'How Many Seats Does the United States Have in the Arab League' which said:

'It is not in the European Community's interests to go along with the United States, Britain and France who are reducing the level on commercial contact with Libya. This decision by the European Community was taken without the slightest hesitation even though this means they are sacrificing their own interests. Even though most of the members of the European Community didn't go to the lengths the United States, Britain and France did in imposing harsh resolutions and the like against the people of the Great Jamahiriyah. Despite this, the European Community decided to tread the same path as these three countries. This is because the crisis is between an Arab country and a Western one. This is why the European countries supported the three Western countries, who are the wrongdoers and not the wronged. This, despite the historical differences between these European countries, the intense political disagreements they have among each other, and the conflict of interests between them, with the only thing uniting them being their adjacent borders and their churches and cathedrals.'

The AL ZAHF AL AKHDAR continued 'Matched with this European stance is the Arab one which one would expect to think along the lines of the fact that the Arabs are one nation and are not a group of nations like Europe.

In addition, the traditional hostilities which exist between the families, clans and tribes of this single nation. Furthermore, the geography of this nation unites the destiny of its people despite the borders and divisions artificially drawn by colonialism.

Then there is the banner of Islamic religion, which is raised in every Arab capital and the Arabic language which every constitution is written in, given that it is the official language of each country. Finally there is the Arab League, which is older than the United Nations, even if only by a few years.

This league represents a confederal Arab union and its charter includes the principle of joint defence in response to the need for a united Arab security. Yet, the Arab League failed to live up to its principals in the face of the tightening of the unjust harsh measures imposed by the three Western countries under the guise of the Security Council.

Anyone with reason, who is observing the European position to the measures taken by the United States, Britain and France would expect that the Arab League would attempt to veto this resolution which is aimed at a part of the Arab nation, and consequently would affect the entire Arab nation, whether politically economically or with respect to its security.

So, the Arab countries are sacrificing even their own interests in order to appease this nation's enemies and have rushed to comply with this resolution which is supposedly based on 'international legitimacy' even before the European countries have begun to do so.

Instead of the Arab League adopting a critical stance against the tightening of the sanctions it loudly proclaims its apologies. While one could accept that these apologies could be an uncontrollable event, such as natural disasters, like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and the like, it cannot possibly be a political stance adopted on an Arab issue, which would cause damage to a substantial part of the Arab world.

Thus, the only course open to the General Peoples Committee for Unity is to applaud the European Community's stance because at least it is a thousand times better than the Arab League's stance, the stance of an organisation that rushes to close down our airlines offices and to declare their compliance with American legitimacy.

Therefore, the most legitimate question to ask is: 'How many seats does the United States have in the Arab League?'

Industry Secretary Meets With Austrian Ministers

LD0212185693 Tripoli JANA in English 1824 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Kanun [November] 2, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretary of the General People's Committee for Industry held a meeting last night in Vienna with the Austrian federal ministers of communications and economy .

The meetings discussed the best ways for strengthening the cooperative relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and Austria in all areas. Points of view were exchanged on a number of issues of joint concern.

Austrian-Libyan Protocol Signed

LD0212190293 Tripoli JANA in English 1823 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Vienna, Al Kanun [November] 2, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The meetings of the Arab Libyan-Austrian joint committee were concluded last night by signing a protocol.

The protocol was signed by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Industry and from the Austrian side by the Federal Minister of Economy.

Sudan

Al-Bashir: Country Ready To Counter U.S. 'Threats'

EA0212154993 Khartoum SUNA in English 0919 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 2 Dec (SUNA)—The Paris-based Arabic language AL-MUHARRIR newspaper has conducted an interview with the president of the republic, General 'Umar al-Bashir [on] Wednesday [1 December].

The paper's editor-in-chief, Dr. Nabil Maghribi, stated that the interview tackled current Arab developments, in addition to the developments of [the] Hala'ib issue. It also reviewed the internal issues and the economic reform programme. General al-Bashir affirmed that Sudan has taken all adequate measures for facing the American threats if they are escalated.

President General al-Bashir is optimistic over the Arab future, calling on all effective forces to close ranks to stand against the foreign threats and allegations made at the pretext of human rights and democracy, said Dr. Nabil.

Al-Bashir Briefed on Plans for New Media Center

EA0112194093 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, the president of the Republic, was briefed today at the secretariat general of the Council of Ministers on the preliminary blueprint for the projected information, radio, and television building. His excellency described the project as a new challenge and a strategic cultural project which must be implemented by means of a comprehensive national and informational campaign involving all popular and official efforts. He praised the capability of the Sudanese engineer, Abdullah Abbas, who is in charge of implementing the project, and stated that the project would occupy an area of 27,000 square [unit unspecified] at a cost of $28 million. It would be constructed in three stages, which would involve the Ministry of Culture and Information and the radio and television departments. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Hails Somalia Conference

EA0112142193 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 30 Nov 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has affirmed that the conference for coordinating humanitarian assistance to Somalia currently taking place in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, under the auspices of the United Nations, is regarded as a big achievement towards concentrating international efforts to assist Somalia in finding a solution to the continuing dispute. He said at the Foreign Ministry forum today that despite the fact that the conference does not include the political aspects of the issue, it is nevertheless a step towards achieving Somali national reconciliation and rehabilitating the infrastructures that were affected by the war, after reaching a stage of political stability.

Dr. Abu-Salih added that Sudan's address to the conference on humanitarian assistance to Somalia received a big response from the conferees. He pointed out that Sudan's effective role in humanitarian assistance and its contribution toward finding a peaceful solution to the Somali crisis within the African framework was praised.

At the forum, Dr. Abu-Salih touched on the current visit of a South African delegation to the country. He explained that the delegation includes various sectors of officials and experts, technicians, professionals, businessmen, and economists. He said Sudan welcomes the delegation's visit, particularly as it comes at a time when features of a new political system, which calls for the political participation of all political forces in South Africa through a government of national reconciliation, are being laid down. Dr. Abu-Salih confirmed Sudan's acceptance of cooperation with South Africa in the public and private sectors and within the framework of regional cooperation.

Concerning a meeting of the foreign ministers of Sudan and Egypt, the foreign minister said he sent a message to his Egyptian counterpart, 'Amr Musa, in which he expressed the importance of the continuation of negotiation about all the disputed issues between the two countries.

Bahrain

Shaykh Hamad Meets With Saudi Foreign Minister

JN2711152693 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 27 Nov 93

[Text] Manama, 27 Nov (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Defense Forces in Bahrain, today received here Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the occasion of his visit to the country.

His highness the heir apparent welcomed Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal and hailed the solid historical fraternal bilateral relations. His highness said he is proud of the bilateral cooperation that has developed, thanks to the wise leaderships of both countries. He lauded the great role the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is playing to bolster joint Gulf action and to serve Arab and Islamic causes.

His highness asked the Saudi foreign minister to convey his greetings to King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and his wishes for continued progress and prosperity to the fraternal Saudi people.

Discussions dealt with bilateral relations, views on cooperation and coordination in various fields, and ways to bolster joint Gulf action, in addition to current developments in the Arab and international arenas, and issues of mutual concern.

Kuwait

Defense Minister Leaves for Moscow Visit

LD2911115093 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 29 Nov 93

[Text] Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah left the country today for Moscow on an official visit to Russia at the invitation of his Russian counterpart Pavel Grachev. During his visit the defense minister will sign a defense cooperation agreement between the two countries.

The visit follows a visit which the Russian defense minister paid to Kuwait during which a memorandum of understanding concerning the defense cooperation agreement was signed between the State of Kuwait and the Russian Federation on 16 February. With the signing of this agreement, Russia will be the fourth UN Security Council permanent member state which has signed a security agreement with the State of Kuwait, after the United States, France, and Britain.

Measures To Defend Border With Iraq 'Reassuring'

LD2811111593 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0715 GMT 28 Nov 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 28 Nov (KUNA)—In a statement to the press published here today, the chairman of the joint interior, defense, and foreign affairs committee of the National Assembly said that the measures being taken by the Kuwaiti Armed Forces to defend the borders are adequate and reassuring.

Chairman of the joint committee and National Assembly member Jasim Hamad al-Saqr said in an exclusive statement to the Kuwait newspaper AL-WATAN that although a stretch of five km on the borders between Kuwait and Iraq is demilitarized, the Kuwaiti Armed Forces' preparations inside Kuwaiti territory outside the demilitarized area are good and adequate to meet any eventuality.

He added that Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah has given the committee a full and reassuring account of the preparations made in the armed forces to confront any likely aggression or encroachment at any moment.

Commenting on the joint committee's meeting with Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, first deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, and 'Ali al-Sabah, the defense minister, al-Saqr said that the committee reviewed all aspects of these encroachments and acts of aggression and that it heard about a number of precautionary measures taken at the time of the incidents, including contacting the United Nations through Muhammad Abu-al-Hasan, Kuwait's permanent UN representative, and presenting a memorandum of protest regarding these encroachments.

In his statement to AL-WATAN, al-Saqr said that things are going well regarding the security trench, since work on it has not stopped. The 24-hour watch on the borders is also going well. Al-Saqr recalled that in this respect the government has taken a number of measures which the National Assembly has been informed of and which we believe to be adequate and reassuring. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Consultative Council Head Receives Iranian Envoy

LD2911151793 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1430 GMT 29 Nov 93

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Ibrahim Bin-Jubayr, chairman of the Consultative Council, received in his office today Dr. Mohammad 'Ali Hadi, Iranian ambassador to the Kingdom. The two men had a cordial discussion on a number of issues of mutual interest. The Iranian ambassador also conveyed his congratulations to the chairman of the Consultative Council on the occasion of the appointment of the council members.

* Al-Malik Reports on Industrial Development Fund

94AE0028A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Nov 93 pp 10-11

[Article by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Salam]

[Text] Riyadh—The Saudi Industrial Development Fund's annual report for fiscal year 1412-13 of the Hegira (1992) asserts that as of the end of the Gulf crisis, the Saudi economy has experienced strong growth, which has been reflected in the performance of all production sectors, especially in the areas of industrial investment and production. The report notes that the total number of industrial loans approved in 1992 amounted to 90 loans for establishing 56 new industrial projects and 34 loans for expanding already existing projects. The total appropriations for these loans amounted to 1.92 billion riyals[R]. Compared to last year [1991], the value of the loans has increased by 9.8 percent.

Dr. Ahmad al-'Abdallah al-Malik, the fund's executive board chairman, has pointed out that the fund has begun to implement new regulations to study expansion projects, thus abridging the period needed to consider applications for such loans and contributing to the considerable increase in the number of approved loans, which exceed by 32 percent the loans approved in the preceding year. Dr. al-Malik has also pointed out that the number of loans from the time the fund was established and until the end of fiscal year 1992 was 1,532 industrial loans which have benefited 1,216 industrial projects in the various industrial sectors and in the various parts of the Kingdom. The value of the loans approved for these projects amounted to R21.722 billion, of which R15.117 billion have been disbursed. Meanwhile, the value of loans repaid to the fund has amounted to R10.38 billion, thus enabling the fund to rely on its intrinsic resources.

Al-Malik has also pointed out that in addition to its activity in the industrial loans area, the fund manages two financing programs, one to finance refrigerated warehouse projects and the other to finance dates packaging projects. The fund's appropriations for these two programs amounted to R380 million for refrigerated warehouse projects and R95 million for dates packaging projects.

Chemicals Sector in the Lead

Salih 'Abdallah al-Nu'aym, the fund's general director, has said that loans granted in 1992 contributed to establishing 56 new industrial projects and to expanding 34 already existing projects. He also noted that the chemical products sector led the other sectors in utilizing loans granted during the year. The value of loans granted to this sector amounted to R632 million representing 33 percent of the total value of loans granted during the year. This sector was followed by the consumer products sector which obtained loans valued at R628 million. The engineering products sector came next, obtaining R484 million. Al-Nu'aym also noted that the sales by industrial projects financed by the fund amounted to R28.46 billion in 1992, rising by 13.4 percent over the preceding year's sales.

Economic Position of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1992

Despite the weak improvement in the economy and the continued slowdown of economic activity in most countries of the world in 1992, the Saudi economy maintained its balanced growth for the fourth successive year. The Kingdom's gross domestic project for 1992 grew by nearly 5 percent. By comparing this rate with the the extraordinary average growth rate of 10 percent achieved in the 1990-91 period, we find that the Kingdom's economy is moving currently toward moderation and toward stabilization at more realistic levels that are expected to be maintained until the mid-1990s. The current rise in the Kingdom's economic growth rate is due to several important reasons, including: the private sector's increased contribution, increased government spending, high production rates for oil and oil derivatives, increased confidence and investment in the commercial fields, expansion and growth in the money markets, prosperity experienced by the service and production sectors, and increased demand for and increased spending on consumer goods. The positive impact of these factors and of the relatively good growth rate is expected to continue, thus bolstering the optimistic view concerning the Kingdom's future economy for 1993 and later.

The oil sector's good performance is one of the most significant factors that affected the Kingdom's economic growth in 1992. Despite the conditions engulfing the 1992 expectations, it has been proved that 1992 has been a relatively good year for the oil sector. This condition was a result of the fact that oil prices were maintained at their 1991 levels, plus the fact that the Kingdom maintained a production rate that exceeded an average of eight million barrels daily.

Like the oil sector, the Kingdom's non-oil sector continued its expansion, growing by nearly 6 percent in 1992. Thanks to the expansion-oriented fiscal policy and to flourishing commercial investments, the non-oil sectors showed good growth during the year. Increased consumer confidence and higher consumer spending promoted confidence in the commercial performance.

Generally, the Saudi economy experienced another year of good performance in 1992, thus continuing its strong tendency—which surfaced in the wake of the Gulf crisis—to flourish. Even though full details of the economic statistics are not available yet, the available data and indications demonstrate clearly the good performance of the Kingdom's economy in 1992. We will sum up some of these indicators in the following:

1. The growth rate achieved in the Kingdom's total gross domestic product amounted to nearly five percent in 1992. Even though this rate is lower than the extraordinary rates achieved in the 1990-91 period, the 1992

estimated growth is still good. It is, moreover, more realistic and more likely to continue until the mid-1990s. The non-oil gross domestic product recorded a growth of nearly six percent in 1992. The industry sector's growth rates have been estimated at nearly 6.4 percent and the agricultural sector's growth rates at nearly 7.5 percent.

2. According to the cost-of-living indicator, the inflation rate dropped by 0.05 percent in 1992, compared to its high 1991 rate, which is estimated at 4.8 percent. The government's domestic subsidies program, for which nearly R7.1 billion were allocated in 1992, continues to contribute tangibly to absorbing the negative consequences of price hikes to the domestic consumer. The subsidies program received an additional boost in 1992 when the government announced further reductions in the prices of services (water, electricity, and telephone). The Kingdom's current inflation rates are considered lower than the rates recorded internationally.

3. The Kingdom's 1992 foreign trade figures, especially the leap made in imports, reflect the Kingdom's flourishing economy. The Kingdom's 1992 exports have been estimated at R160.6 billion, whereas the imports amounted to R122.6 billion. The figures recorded in 1991 amounted to R178.9 billion for exports and R108.8 billion for imports.

4. The year 1992 saw the government adopt an expansion-oriented budget in which allocations for government spending amounted to R181 billion, compared to the pre-crisis spending level which was set at R141 billion for 1989. Add to this the big expansion projects, which were adopted by some governmental production sectors (such as ARAMCO [Arab-American Oil Company]). All these direct and indirect government expenditures represent a big boost for the various sectors of the domestic economy.

5. The private sector continued to bolster its position in and its contribution to the economy. A number of this sector's production segments grew at a rate of 6-7 percent. There are several indicators at the operational level, which confirm that there was a leap in this sector's activity in 1992.

Other indicators of the private sector's flourishing activity in 1992 include the big increase, amounting to 32 percent, in the volume of loans advanced by commercial banks during the year. In another area connected with the private industrial sector, the number of loan applications received by the Saudi Industrial Development Fund in 1992 rose by 37 percent, whereas the number of loans approved by the bank for the same year rose by 32 percent.

6. The performance of the Kingdom's financial sectors was characterized by a number of positive developments and accomplishments. The banking sector in particular experienced a strong growth in its assets and its net profits in 1992, thus continuing its success of 1991. Saudi banks benefited greatly from the concerted repatriation of private sector capital after the end of the Gulf crisis. These banks also benefited from the growing Saudi stock market. A number of these banks took this opportunity to increase their capital by offering shares for subscription and by establishing funds for investment in Saudi stocks. In cooperation with the Saudi Arab Monetary Establishment, the banking sector continued its effective contribution to government financing through the government borrowing program (government bonds and treasury bonds).

7. The construction sector's activity experienced great revival as of the end of the Gulf crisis, especially in 1992 when this activity made an immense leap. The accelerating construction activity produced strong positive results for many of the Kingdom's other industrial and economic sectors. It is expected that this activity will continue to grow and to have a positive impact on the other industrial and economic sectors.

8. Other positive commercial and marketing indicators for 1992 provide evidence of consumer confidence, which is made evident by the rising consumer spending level. This tendency is expected to bolster demand for a variety of consumer products. In this regard, preliminary figures announced recently on the population census (which has shown that the Kingdom's total population is 16.9 million people, including 12.3 million Saudi citizens) demonstrate the domestic market's absorption capacity.

To put it briefly, the Saudi economy has continued in 1993 [as published] its tendency toward strong growth, especially in the post-Gulf crisis period. Even though the 1992 growth rates are somewhat lower than the levels achieved in the 1990-91 period, these rates are still good. Moreover, it is likely that they will be maintained until the mid-1990s. As demonstrated by the preceding brief review of the 1992 economic and commercial indicators, it is evident to us that all the main sectors of the economy performed soundly and that the future expectations of this performance are positive, thus bolstering the optimistic view concerning the Saudi economy for 1993.

Industry's Tendencies and Indicators

The Kingdom's industrial development has a fundamental role in developing the country's economy. Industry derives its important role from the long-range strategic goal, which calls for diversifying the Kingdom's economic base by developing the non-oil production sectors. In continuation of previous development plans, the Kingdom's current five-year plan (1990-95) underlines the importance of the vanguard role of industrial development. With the end of the Gulf crisis and with the Kingdom's renewed emphasis on the main aspects of economic development, industrial development has been foremost among the spheres that have experienced noticeable revival in their operational and investment activity.

Long-range economic performance indicators can be viewed through the historical tendencies of the volume and makeup of the gross domestic product generated by the Kingdom's conversion industries. It is evident that the added value produced by the conversion industries grew from less than R2 billion in the early 1970s to more than R32 billion by the end of 1991. From another, and more important, aspect, the conversion industries' share (excluding oil refining) of the sectors' total added value represented no more than a small portion (less than 20 percent) in the early 1970s. But this share grew steadily until it came to represent the major portion, amounting to 58 percent [of the added value] by the end of 1991. This reflects the vitality and effectiveness of the Saudi conversion industries sector. The constant development and growth of the Kingdom's petrochemicals industry has contributed to bolstering and increasing the share of the non-oil conversion industries. With the onset of 1990, the composition of the added value produced by the Kingdom's conversion industries was as follows: 40 percent from the oil refining industry, 22 percent from the petrochemicals industry, and 38 percent from the other conversion industries. The industrial sector's growth declined in the mid-1980s as a result of the slowdown in the Kingdom's general economic activity in the wake of the severe collapses of the world's oil markets.

But with the revival of the economic activity, the industrial sector (especially the conversion industries segment) was a vanguard in strengthening this revival. This sector's growth rate rose from 4.7 percent in 1988 to 10 percent in 1989. The Gulf crisis has demonstrated the industrial sector's flexibility and its ability to adapt to the developments quickly. As soon as the national economy managed to absorb the first shock, the industrial sector resumed its customary activity promptly and with minimum negative consequences. The sector grew by 8.9 percent in 1990 and then by a 9.1 percent in 1991. When the crisis ended, the Kingdom's general economic and investment climate experienced great improvement, which was reflected in increased industrial investments in both the public and the private sectors. The industrial sector continued its growth in this climate, recording a growth rate of 6.4 percent in 1992.

The industrial sector's growth continued after the end of the Gulf crisis as a result of improved circumstances and of increased confidence in the Kingdom's working environment. It is noticed that the cement and construction materials sectors were the two sectors that experienced the most remarkable increase in their average sales. The increased sales of these two sectors coincided with the strong revival and growth experienced by the construction sector after the Gulf crisis ended.

The prevalent tendencies of the private industries that have been established recently and that are scheduled to be established reflect the vital composition of the Saudi industrial sector. In this regard, a total of 211 permits for new industries were issued in 1992. Of this number, 20 percent went to food industries, 23 percent to chemicals and plastic industries, and 32 percent to metal product industries. These percentages demonstrate the growing importance of the food, chemicals, and metal industries to the future of the Kingdom's conversion industries.

It is worth pointing out that this tendency can also be noticed through the loans approved by the fund in 1992. The food and beverage industries' share of those loans amounted to 26 percent; the chemicals and plastic industries share amounted to 29 percent; and the metal product industries' share amounted to 29 percent. This means that these three sectors represent 84 percent of the fund's total credits for 1992.

Future Horizons and Tendencies

The Kingdom's accelerated economic growth in the wake of the Gulf crisis seems likely to continue, but at more moderate rates in 1993 and until the mid-1990s. These expectations are based on the continuity of the factors that have spurred the Kingdom's current growth. These factors include: confidence in the working and investment climate, expanded money and capital markets, revived production and service sectors, and growing consumer demand and spending. Under these optimistic expectations, industrial development seems to be in a much better position to accomplish more.

These expectations are supported by the strategic role set aside by the Kingdom's current five-year plan (1990-95) for industrial development. This plan considers industrial development a main element of the comprehensive development strategy.

Industrial development contributes to achieving the most important goals of comprehensive development. These goals are embodied in: achieving higher gross domestic product rates; diversifying and expanding the production base; developing the non-oil revenue sources; attaining a reasonable self-sufficiency level; creating employment opportunities; and seeking to attain a balanced economy. Within the context of its tendency to enhance and bolster private sector participation in the Kingdom's development, the government has given and continues to give the private industrial sector strong and ceaseless aid.

As part of the optimistic expectations for the Kingdom's economic growth, it is expected that the industrial sector will continue the revival and development it has displayed in the post-Gulf crisis period by exploring and exploiting the available investment and growth opportunities and fields. At present, numerous such opportunities are available to the private sector in the industrial development area. These opportunities include increasing the production capacities of the oil production and refining installations and expanding the production capacities of the petrochemicals industry. They also include the strong revival in the construction sector and its activities, the importance and vitality of joint industrial corporations, and numerous other fields and opportunities in the Kingdom's conversion industries.

Despite the accomplishments achieved toward the objective of diversifying the Kingdom's economy, which relies on oil, the oil sector continues to play a fundamental role in the Kingdom's economic development. Oil's influence extends to all economic sectors and revenues and to the government's fiscal and economic policies. Therefore, expansion of the oil sector will have a direct and indirect impact on the future of many of these sectors. To bolster its major and growing role in the world oil markets, the Kingdom is exerting efforts to implement a complete program to expand and modernize the oil sector. In the area of oil production, ARAMCO is implementing an immense program with the objective of increasing the Kingdom's crude oil production capacity to 10 million barrels daily with the onset of the mid-1990s.

As for oil refining, plans are being made to implement an ambitious program that seeks to expand and modernize the Kingdom's oil refining installations so as to boost the refining capacity and to increase the Kingdom's share of the world market for refined products.

As for marketing, ARAMCO seeks, in light of its successful experiment with Texaco in entering the U.S. markets, to form joint corporations with Europe, Japan, and the Far East so as to entrench its presence in the field of distributing and retailing final oil derivatives in these regions. Generally, it is expected that the programs to expand the oil sector will have positive effects on numerous other conversion industries.

The second half of the 1980s witnessed extraordinarily high growth rates in the petrochemicals production of the Saudi Arab Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC), which enabled this sector to lead the other industrial sectors in growth and, moreover, to lead the Kingdom's non-oil sectors generally. The petrochemicals sector has contributed to opening and establishing markets for Saudi non-oil exports in more than 70 countries. At the 1990 levels, petrochemical exports constituted 77 percent of the Kingdom's total non-oil exports, which amounted to R12.4 billion for that year. Based on this great success, SABIC is implementing an ambitious program that seeks to increase its production capacity from its 1990 level of 13 million tons to 20 million tons by the end of 1995.

It is most likely that this expansion program will have a major direct impact on increasing the Kingdom's petrochemicals production and securing a future share for the Kingdom in the world markets for these products. Moreover, there is another, and no less significant, tendency which focuses on promoting investment in industries branching form the petrochemicals sector. Even though a number of industries connected with SABIC's products have been founded or proposed, this field has not been fully utilized. The opportunity to establish more such industries is still available and it is expected that future years will see more of these conversion industries.

In the wake of the big decline recorded by the construction and building sector during the fourth five-year development plan (1985-90), the fifth five-year plan (1990-95) expects that this sector will experience a relatively strong growth at an average of 3.8 percent annually during the plan years. According to the plan visions, the construction growth areas include: university buildings, health utilities, defense-related projects, housing units, and infrastructure projects. However, the building and construction sector has experienced strong revival since the end of the Gulf crisis. Construction activity has made an immense leap, especially in 1992. Components of the revived construction activity include five main areas: housing construction, commercial and industrial installations, expansions by public sector companies, government projects, including defense projects, and conventional maintenance of public service installations and main facilities.

The strong revival of the building and construction sector in 1992 has led to greatly increased demand for construction materials, especially cement. Consequently, cement markets experienced a noticeable shortage during the year. This condition encouraged a number of domestic cement companies to try to increase their production capacities in order to meet current and future demand. It is also expected that a number of other industries involved in the field of construction materials will follow this same direction. As it is generally well known, the construction sector is tied closely to a number of conversion industries (furniture industries, industries producing consumer goods, and some other industries).

Thus, the strong current revival in the building and construction sector will have positive effects on numerous conversion industry sectors, not to mention that it encourages other economic sectors and the national economy generally.

Joint industrial corporations have contributed effectively to turning the wheel of the country's industrial development. At present, the Kingdom enjoys conditions that make it ready for big growth in the area of foreign investment. These conditions are embodied in the availability of a good infrastructure; in special incentives offered to bolster industry, in the government's promotion of a system that ensures free markets; in the availability of numerous opportunities for joint industrial investments; in the strong growth of the Kingdom's market for industrial products; and in the possibility of entry into the Gulf markets generally.

On top of the above, the government is eager to review and amend the foreign investment laws and regulations so as to make the Kingdom's investment climate more competitive and attractive internationally. Under these conditions, the Kingdom has experienced, especially since the end of the Gulf crisis, growing international interest in the investment opportunities it offers. This interest has resulted in the creation of more joint projects. It is expected that this tendency will continue in the area of the petrochemicals industry and other industries branching from it, in technology-intensive projects, and in numerous industries designated to replace imports. It is also expected that joint industrial projects, especially defense-related projects, will increase in number and will be enlarged within the context of the Kingdom's balanced economy program. An important element here is the opportunities these projects offer for the transfer of sophisticated technology to the Kingdom.

In addition to the above, there are numerous important opportunities and areas that encourage investment in the Kingdom's private industrial sector.

As we have already noted, the Kingdom's financial sectors are experiencing big expansion and development, which have been helped by the repatriation of private sector capital that had been deposited and invested abroad. It is expected that in light of the financial sectors' good performance, this tendency will help improve the conditions for securing the financing needed by existing and new industrial companies.

Another important aspect at present is the government's and private sector's increased interest in small and medium industrial projects by virtue of the major importance of this sector (especially of auxiliary industries and industries producing spareparts and industrial services) to bolstering industrial development by strengthening bonds within the industrial sector. This is in addition to this sector's importance in increasing the private sector's participation in industry and in diversifying the Kingdom's economy generally.

In a related area, the big developments and increases experienced by Saudi industrial exports in recent years are considered important to bolstering the Saudi industry's performance and future. We will mention here, for example, that besides the major development experienced by petrochemical exports, other industrial exports also increased considerably, recording in the 1984-90 an average annual growth rate of 41 percent. In 1991, the value of these exports amounted to R3.6 billion.

To sum up, all the future horizons and tendencies noted above point clearly to the promising opportunities of the Kingdom's private industrial sector. But to utilize these available opportunities effectively, the private industrial sector, which receives ceaseless aid from the government, is required to adopt the method of scientific planning and analysis to face the challenges of operating in the industrial field. Strategically, the private sector has to adopt a new and innovative system that is based on strategic planning and on the ability to compete. Operationally, organization and management capabilities in the areas of financing, production, and marketing have to be developed. But altogether, the private industrial sector seems to be ready to overcome these challenges. What strengthens these expectations is the optimism engulfing the Saudi economy for the coming years and the ceaseless generous aid the government continues to give the private sector.

United Arab Emirates

President Speaks on National Day Anniversary

JN0212185593 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates Radio Network in Arabic 1018 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Speech by United Arab Emirates President Shaykh Zayid Bin- Sultan Al Nuhayyan on 22d independence anniversary in Abu Dhabi on 2 December, read on his behalf by Deputy Prime Minister Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Citizens: We celebrate our 22d national day under the canopy of a new political, international, and regional state of affairs replete, with historic changes which require that we show awareness and exert efforts to safeguard the prestigious status our country has reached among the countries and succeed in tackling the developments and challenges of the age.

In this field, the United Arab Emirates [UAE] works with the fraternal countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] within a framework of cooperation and coordination. While voicing our satisfaction with the progress that has been achieved on the road to solidarity and coordination among the GCC countries, we are looking forward to the forthcoming meeting of the GCC leaders in fraternal Saudi Arabia on 20 December where we hope more practical steps will be taken to consolidate the bonds of cooperation and brotherhood among our countries.

GCC policy is based on the need to respect the sovereignty of countries, not to interfere in their domestic affairs, and on their right to exploit their natural resources. The GCC countries also reject the use of force or the threat to use it as a means for settling disputes. From this premise, the UAE has announced its complete readiness and its sincere desire to hold a direct dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran concerning its occupation of the three UAE islands in 1971. We continue to call for dialogue and the need to resort to peaceful means to terminate this occupation, and have the three islands return to UAE sovereignty in accordance with international laws and norms, and the principles of good-neighborliness, and the mutual respect that must prevail among countries.

The GCC constitutes a shield for the peoples of this region and the Arab nation. Based on this, we, in the Arab Gulf, do all our best to share our Arab nation its hopes and aspirations. We believe that Arab solidarity can only be integrated by discarding differences and clearing atmospheres among brothers through a fraternal spirit and tolerance based on sincere frankness and faithful understanding among the sons of the Arab nation so that we will be able to pool efforts and unleash resources to achieve our objectives and to defend our vital common interests. We also hope that the Middle East region, which is at the threshold of a new century, will witness security, stability, and peace in order to unleash its huge resources and its people's capabilities to achieve progress and prosperity and to improve its citizens' living conditions. In light of this, we have welcomed the declaration of principles which was signed by the PLO and Israel as a historic positive beginning and a first step toward reaching a just, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the international legitimacy represented by UN resolutions. We hope that this agreement will be followed by similar progress on the other Arab tracks. Proceeding from the pledge we have made from the very beginning, we, in the UAE, will always be at the forefront of the Palestinian people's supporters to achieve their national aspirations. [passage omitted]

Yemen

Jihad Group, 'Foreign Sides' Destabilizing Country

JN0312105893 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Sanaa, 3 Dec (INA)—Yemeni Interior Minister Brigadier General Yahya al-Mutawakkil has disclosed that the investigations into the recent blasts and political assassinations in the country have proved that the perpetrators are affiliated with the Jihad organization which seeks to undermine security and stability.

In statements published today in the Yemeni newspaper 26 SEPTEMBER, the organ of the Yemeni Defense Ministry, al-Mutawakkil accused foreign sides of being behind what is taking place in Yemen. However, the Yemeni minister did not name these sides. Al-Mutawakkil noted that criminal gangs became more active during the crisis than they were before.

The Yemeni interior minister noted that the assassination attempts were targeted against all Yemeni political parties. However, he added, the attempts were targeted against the leaders of the Yemeni Socialist Party more than other parties in order to create divisions and differences among the Yemeni parties.

Al-Mutawakkil said that his ministry will take firm measures to curb terrorism and crimes, stressing that if these measures are not applied in a satisfactory fashion he will not remain in the ministry.

Socialist Party Clarifies Stance on Federation

PM0212170593 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Dec 93 p 1

[Iqbal 'Abdallah report: "Yemeni Socialist Party: We Have Not Set Federation as Condition for Dialogue"]

[Excerpt] A Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] official said yesterday that "a federation as an alternative is one of the options which the party believes is the peaceful and democratic way out of the crisis. It is not a condition for dialogue with the [other] two coalition parties [the General People's Congress and the Yemeni Reform Grouping] and the opposition parties to discuss ways out of the crisis and solutions to end it."

The official, who is from the YSP Political Bureau, stressed that "the statement made by Salim Salih Muhammad, member of the Presidential Council and assistant secretary general of the YSP, about a federation as an alternative that safeguards the homeland's unity has been exposed to misleading distortions from some political parties. They are designed to increase the severity of the current political crisis, instead of responsibly understanding its causes and looking for objective and realistic ways out of it—ways out that safeguard the unity and democracy march."

In a statement to AL-HAYAH in Aden yesterday the source said that "the Political Bureau clearly defined its position on the crisis in statements issued by it. And also in the statement issued by the YSP Central Committee's 31st extraordinary session held in Aden last month and which emphasized the 18 points proposed by the Political Bureau and which are primarily aimed at finding real and firm guarantees for unity and for reinforcing the democratic march and opening new horizons to achieve progress for the Yemeni people." He pointed out that "the YSP, which has always been unionist throughout its political and national history, and which was the first to espouse the option of unity, democracy, and building a modern state, continues—firmly and decisively—to maintain this line. And it is much bigger than all those cheap attempts designed to harm and distort its history and unionist position." [passage omitted]

Tariq 'Aziz Returns to Baghdad From UN Talks

JN0212165093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1450 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Dec (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, Revolution Command Council member and deputy prime minister, returned to Baghdad this afternoon from New York.

Tariq 'Aziz led a political and technical delegation to the United Nations where he had intensive talks with the Security Council members and the chairman of the Special Commission supervising the dismantling of banned weapons in Iraq.

AL-THAWRAH: Iraq Respects International Will

JN0312102993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0800 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Dec (INA)—AL-THAWRAH says that Iraq's dealings with the United Nations stem from its respect for the principle of the international will and the UN Charter and from its deep awareness of the importance of peace, dialogue, and understanding. In an article published today, AL-THAWRAH says: Iraq's approach to dealing with the international organization is based firmly in its policy; it is not a passing matter. This, the paper adds, should prompt others to review the policy they adopt vis-a-vis Iraq and to abandon blackmail and cheap transient gains.

The paper notes that the talks Iraq held with the UN Special Commission and the joint report, which was signed with the commission the day before yesterday, reiterate Iraq's compliance with the UN resolutions and disprove the pretexts and excuses used by some to maintain the blockade.

AL-THAWRAH says: The United Nations' recognition of Iraq's honest cooperation, the Russian and French reception of Iraq's approach, and [Iraq's] acceptance of Resolution 715, must prompt the international community to swiftly and firmly implement Article 22 of Resolution 687, which shows the duties of the international community toward Iraq.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Iraq's dealing and positions call for the United Nations and the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, to shoulder their moral responsibilities and to adopt a positive stand by lifting the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq.

Army Reportedly on 'High Alert' in Marshlands

NC0312155293 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Our sources inside the steadfast marshlands say tyrant Saddam's forces remain on high alert and the various organs of regime oppression remain deployed in surrounding areas fearing any new action by the heroic mujahidin against the regime's henchmen and military institutions.

The command of the 3d and 4th Corps has stopped issuing normal leave to officers. It tightened the rules against its members and increased the guardposts in a move that indicates the regime is worried about attack from the popular Islamic Resistance forces.

Saddam Receives Sympathy Cable From 'Arafat

JN0312110493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1015 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Dec (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has received a cable of condolences from Yasir 'Arafat, state of Palestine president and PLO Executive Committee chairman, on the death of late Hajj Khayrallah Talfah. The cable states:

His Excellency Saddam Husayn, Republic of Iraq president: With deep regret I heard of the death of brother Khayrallah Talfah, your father-in-law and maternal uncle.

I beseech God Almighty to grant him his mercy and paradise. I also beseech him to grant you, all your family, and the dear sister your wife, patience and consolation. Please accept my warmest condolences on this loss. From God we come, and to him we return.

Rabin Returns From Europe, Denies 'Impasse'

TA0312061193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin returned late last night from a 3-day tour of five European countries. In a briefing to Israeli correspondents before leaving London, he said there is no impasse in the talks with the PLO and that the statements emanating from Tunis are a trick. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir, who accompanied Mr. Rabin on his tour, reports:

[Begin recording] [Nir] Among other things, during his tour of Europe Mr. Rabin was busy extinguishing fires or, to be more precise, issuing denials. He denied reports published in Israel that he had relayed a message to 'Arafat proposing to him that if he progressed in the negotiations, Rabin would be prepared to recognize a Palestinian flag and currency. He also denied an agreement with 'Arafat on putting off the implementation of the agreement on 13 December, the PLO announcement about an impasse or dead end in the negotiations, and reports that he would meet with 'Arafat. Here is what he said last night in London in a briefing to Israeli correspondents:

[Rabin] You probably heard all sorts of reports on the radio all day today, including a report from Tunis that we have reached an impasse and reports about possible meetings. We want to go ahead with the negotiations, and we do not accept that there is an impasse. We will continue the negotiations.

In one of my meetings, a European prime minister asked me what could be done to help, and I replied: The agreement initialed in Oslo was made by us and Palestinian PLO members without the sponsorship of anybody. The responsibility lies with us, and we—the Palestinian and Israeli representatives—are the ones who should reach a solution. We do not need any uncles, fathers, grandfathers, or grandmothers. This is a responsibility we undertook together, and we are the ones who should implement it. The PLO cannot run to any cosponsors or anybody else. The responsibility lies with Israel and the Palestinians.

[Nir] Mr. Rabin also referred to the possibility that the Palestinians are creating a crisis in order to involve the Americans and get some rewards, seeing that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is due in Israel today.

As for Nabil Sha'th's announcement about a meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat, the prime minister said:

[Rabin] Nobody has approached me on this issue, other than what I heard on the radio. I do not want to go into the question of whether a meeting will or will not be held. What is important now is that the committees continue their work. If they do not pursue their work, there will be no sense in a meeting, because we will not be able to ascertain whether such a meeting is necessary.

[Nir] Rabin said he had not received any request for a meeting with 'Arafat, but he did not rule it out if progress is made in the negotiations by the committees. In any event, he described the PLO's statements on the issue as a trick. [end recording]

Rabin Names Conditions for Withdrawal on Golan

TA0312115993 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 3 Dec 93 p A5

[Report by Yerah Tal]

[Text] Israel will condition its withdrawal on the Golan on various issues, including the withdrawal of all Syrian troops from Lebanon, the disbandment of all the Palestinian organizations headquarters in Syria, and the disbandment of Hizballah in Lebanon. This was recently stated by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in internal consultations held in anticipation of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's arrival in the region. Christopher's Israel visit begins today.

In this, Rabin has adopted the recommendations of defense elements who maintained that Israel is likely to find itself in an inferior strategic position if it withdraws from the Golan while Syrian troops amounting to a division are deployed in Lebanon and terrorist organizations continue launching operations from their Syrian and Lebanese bases.

According to political sources in Jerusalem, Rabin still believes in territorial compromise on the Golan, but he will not agree to full withdrawal from the Golan, a stance he will explain to the U.S. secretary of state.

It has been learned that Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres disagree on this issue, with Peres maintaining that Israel can agree to withdraw from all of the Golan if it receives assurances that not a single Syrian soldier will be stationed on the Golan and if additional appropriate security measures are established.

Another controversial issue is the question of international or U.S. troop deployment in Golan areas evacuated by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Rabin does not want to entrust Israel's defense either to an international or a U.S. contingent, preferring IDF observation posts and a defense line on the Golan.

In the course of his shuttle tour, Christopher may explore a recent proposal that Syria should consent to Israel's remaining on the Golan cliff line [qav hamatzuq], in return for which Israel will give Syria substitute areas, such as Hamat Gader, the Baniyas heights, and the village of al-Ghajar where the Israeli, Syrian, and Lebanese borders meet.

As for the water sources in Golan areas to be evacuated by Israel, it will be proposed that they should be jointly maintained and operated by Israel and Syria.

The U.S. secretary of state will also explore Syria's readiness to accept a proposal according to which Israel will recognize Syrian sovereignty on the entire Golan in return for which the Jewish settlements will not be uprooted and will remain where they are. Such an arrangement can take place as part of Syria's leasing the lands to Israel for a long period.

Political sources in Jerusalem last night pointed out, however, that Rabin and Peres still adhere to their position that the first priority should be to implement the agreement with the PLO and make progress on the unresolved parts of the agreement with Jordan. Only when these objectives are achieved should negotiations with Syria be broached.

Rabin and Peres will ask the U.S. secretary of state to try to persuade Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to agree to a deferral of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations for several months. Peres said yesterday, however, that if the Syrian president makes more reasonable proposals than those he has to date, there is nothing to prevent the immediate resumption of negotiations with Syria.

Peres said he believes that on his Middle East mission, the U.S. secretary of state will try to promote the peace talks on all tracks: the Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, and Lebanese.

Labor Knesset members from the Golan Heights lobby and the Council of Jewish Settlements in the Golan Heights will request a meeting with Christopher in a bid to convey their appeal for U.S. support for an arrangement under which Israel would retain its hold on the Golan.

Baraq Comments on Withdrawal From Golan Heights

TA0312170093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Addressing the Industrial-Commercial Club today, Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq said that Israel wants to remove Syria from the circle of hostility. According to Baraq, al-Asad wants to receive from Israel all the territory, until the last centimeter, but as long as there is a possibility of war with Syria we need every centimeter on the Golan Heights. Baraq noted, however, that peace can be combined with security arrangements and a phased, long-term IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment on the Golan Heights. The chief of staff emphasized that Syria has great influence in Lebanon, both in controlling the terrorists' supply routes and their activity, and in determining the Lebanese Government's freedom of action.

Lieutenant General Baraq noted that Israel has no territorial demands in south Lebanon's security zone, and will be ready to vacate if a comprehensive agreement with Lebanon is reached and SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldiers' safety is guaranteed.

The chief of staff also said that the Arabs believe Israel has a nuclear capacity and realize that it cannot be destroyed. [passage omitted]

Baraq on 'Likelihood' of Delay in Accord

TA0312144593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq says substantial differences of opinion have surfaced in our negotiations with the Palestinians, adding we have no guarantees that they will be resolved by 13 December. According to Baraq there is a likelihood that the negotiations will not be completed and the implementation of the agreement will be delayed.

Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that addressing the Industrial-Commercial Club, Lieutenant General Baraq noted that the Palestinians are striving to establish an independent state, and therefore they attribute great importance to symbolic elements. Baraq emphasized that Israel wants to maintain blocs of Jewish settlements in the territories and avoid uprooting any settlement.

Shahal Urges Border Control Posts on Green Line

TA0312075193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal has recommended border control posts be set up on every road along the Green Line, the pre-1967 border. Anyone crossing would have to show necessary documentation, Shahal told members of the Labor party.

U.S. Proposals on Syria Termed 'Tempting'

TA0312150193 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 3 Dec 93 p 1

[Commentary by Pe'erli Shahar: "The Periodical Trial Balloon"]

[Text] Every time before the U.S. secretary of state lands in the region—this time included—columnists Evans and Novak launch the U.S. Administration's trial balloon.

The parties involved, namely Israel and the other relevant countries, are supposed to pick up the message and analyze it even before Christopher's plane lands in the region.

If some people doubted Christopher's intention to concentrate on the Syrian track, Evans and Novak detail it by spelling out what goodies the patron will distribute. The columnists tell us he agrees that the withdrawal from the Golan Heights be implemented in stages over a period of time, rather than in one stroke. The United States also agrees to have its soldiers included in a multinational force which will be deployed along the border and in the demilitarized zones. Israel will also receive planes and other military guarantees, while

Syria's special status in Lebanon will be recognized. Syria will not be requested to withdraw its soldiers from south Lebanon, and the Syrian president will be invited for a meeting with the U.S. President.

These are tempting proposals which, while lacking in vision and farsightedness, evince a sober recognition of the situation on the ground.

It is obvious that under the present circumstances this is the least of evils and the most realistic solution. The question is whether Jerusalem will agree to start the process now, thus enabling Jordan to sign a peace agreement, or will the answer be delayed until we arrive at a point where we have to pay a higher price.

Settlers Plan To 'Conquer' Jericho, PLO Center

TA0212185093 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Video report by military correspondent Roni Daniyel]

[Text] We open this evening newscast with a first-time report on a plan designed by the settlers to carry out a massive takeover of Jericho and the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem. These plans are currently being discussed by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, and are aimed at foiling the implementation of the Israel-PLO agreement.

A detailed contingency plan to conquer Jericho has been prepared by the settlers' council. The preliminary preparations for it have been completed, and the date set for its execution is a day or two before the 13th of next month [date as heard]. Thousands of settlers and supporters will be brought to Jericho on what will be described a farewell tour, while in fact they will conquer the city—as they express it. They will seize homes, roads, shops, and everything they can, and will stay there for an indefinite period. This plan will be executed only if Israel's Government decides to make any move to mark 13 December.

Last night, however, the settlers almost carried out another contingency plan—a plan to conquer the Orient House in Jerusalem, the headquarters of the PLO leadership here. Hours before this operation was to take place, a final meeting of the settlers' decisionmakers was held. A vote on the move drew a tie, and therefore they decided not to take over the place, for the time being.

In reaction to this report, the council spokesman told us that offers for a massive settler takeover of Jericho and the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem were broached at the council, but were eventually rejected.

Golan Settlers Reject U.S. Pressure

TA0312104793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] The Committee of Golan Settlements has called on the U.S. Administration to cease pressuring the Israeli Government to withdraw on the Golan Heights, asserting that this is gross interference in Israel's domestic policy.

A communique released by the committee this morning states that U.S. soldiers cannot be a substitute for Israel's control of the Golan Heights. The committee warns Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin that any attempt to withdraw from the Golan will lead to the downfall of the entire government and to a halt in the peace process.

Our correspondent in the north Yo'av Aviv reports that committee chairman Eli Malka has requested a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during his visit to Israel. Christopher is due here tonight.

Beilin on Golan Settlers, Test of PLO Accord

TA0312123893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin said the meaning of Labor's position concerning the Golan Heights is that some settlers in the area will continue to live under Israeli sovereignty and some under Syrian sovereignty, and they will have to choose where they want to stay.

He added that the PLO's ability to quell terror will be tested only after the Palestinian police force is established. If the PLO fails the test, Beilin said, Israel will consider this a failure of the bilateral agreement and will not agree to a permanent arrangement until the matter is settled. Deputy Minister Beilin was addressing the Hilton Visa Club in Tel Aviv, and his remarks were reported by our correspondent Ilan Lazarovich.

Poll Finds 30 Percent of Settlers Would Leave

TA0312121393 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 3 Dec 93 p 1

[Public opinion poll conducted by the Dahaf Institute directed by Dr. Mina Tzemah]

[Text] Question: If the settlement where you live is included in the autonomy arrangement, will you choose to receive compensation and leave or will you go on living there?

Will opt for compensation—26 percent; depends on the amount of compensation—7 percent; will choose to stay—60 percent; did not reply—7 percent.

An analysis of the findings shows that one-third of the respondents say they will opt for compensation (some say this depends on whether they are satisfied with the amount).

The poll further shows that 82 percent of the respondents who define themselves as religious say they will choose to stay in their settlements compared with 33 percent of those who define themselves as secular, 60 percent of those who describe themselves as ultra-Orthodox, and 54 percent of those who define themselves as traditionalists.

The poll was conducted on Wednesday, 1 December, among 430 respondents, who constitute a representative sample of the adult Jewish population beyond the Green Line (excluding Ma'ale Adumim). The maximum margin of error is 4 percent.

Police Arrest, Interrogate Kakh Members

TA0312074093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Excerpts] A 36-year-old resident of Ma'ale Adumim, found in possession of a gun and other materiel smuggled in from the United States, was arrested yesterday. The Israel Police unit for serious crime investigations has gone into high gear with regard to the aforementioned Kakh activist. Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky reports:

[Begin Bushinsky recording] The police have seemingly not let up in their efforts to thwart illegal activities which they suspect were perpetrated by Kakh members. Following the arrest of Rabbi Avraham Toledano, who is suspected of having smuggled weapons into Israel, the police launched a campaign to locate other suspects.

At least three other persons have been interrogated in connection with the almost international arms smuggling affair. A 36-year-old man from Ma'ale Adumim who is close to Kakh was arrested. He was found in possession of a 9-mm gun smuggled in from the United States and which was held without license; a grenade issued by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], apparently used for training; and two bullet magazines. Incidentally, the suspect owns a gym in Jerusalem.

Two other Kakh members, also from Ma'ale Adumim, were interrogated yesterday. One of them was in charge of coordinating external operations and had been a Jewish Defense League activist in the United States and even taught at Har Habayit Yeshiva with Rabbi Toledano. The second suspect was supposed to have picked Rabbi Toledano up at the airport.

Kakh spokesman No'am Federman said that the wave of arrests will not deter his movement. [passage omitted]

Federman added that the police searched Har Habayit Yeshiva and Rabbi Toledano's home in Qiryat Arba' but, according to him, the search yielded no results. [end recording]

Claim of Kidnapped Officer in Lebanon Denied

NC0312150893 Paris AFP in English 1445 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Dec 3 (AFP)—Israel Friday denied a claim by a previously unknown Palestinian group that an Israeli officer was kidnapped in April during an attack on a command post.

In a statement obtained by AFP in Beirut the previously unknown "Secret Organisation of the Guardians of Jerusalem" said it had kidnapped "Officer Messali" [name as received] on April 18 during an attack on an Israeli command post in Nazareth in northern Israel.

An Israeli army spokesman denied the claim, dated Thursday, saying an investigation had proven it was "totally groundless."

"There was no attack on Nazareth. No officer nor soldier disappeared, and we are not aware of the name Messali," the spokesman added.

The statement issued in Beirut was accompanied by a colour photograph of a man aged between 30 and 40.

The group said the officer was born in Germany and his mother's maiden name was Aline.

He was a member of the Israeli internal security service Shin Beth, and was serving in the elite Golani brigade.

"Several officers were killed in the attack and their death was attributed by the Zionist enemy to a training accident," the group said.

It demanded the release of all Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners held by Israel, along with all those "kidnapped" in Lebanon and Arab detainees, in exchange for Messali.

Vilna'i Meets Fatah Leaders, To Release Prisoner

TA0312110993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Major General Matan Vilna'i, commander of the Southern Command, conferred for two hours this morning with Fatah leaders in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the Fatah leaders, including Sami Abu-Samahdanah, asked Vilna'i to release Taysir al-Bardini, the leader of the Fatah Hawks who was captured in Rafah a few days ago, and to unseal alleys in Gaza.

Maj. Gen. Vilna'i replied that the alleys would be unsealed within a few days but refused to release al-Bardini. On the other hand, he granted their request to release Hisham 'Abd-al-Rizq, a security prisoner from Jabalyah who was scheduled to be released in five months after serving 20 years in prison, today.

Local Arabs pelted cars driving through Policeman's Square in Hebron this morning, including Rabbi Moshe Levinger's car. The rabbi's bodyguards opened fire to chase away the stone throwers. A local Arab was shot in the leg by bullets whose source could not be ascertained. Soldiers arrived on the scene and restored order.

Christopher Visit to Amman Confirmed, Welcomed

JN0212190793 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 2 Dec 93 p 10

[Text] Amman, AKHBAR AL-USBU', exclusive—A responsible Jordanian source has confirmed U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will arrive in Amman next week for talks with His Majesty King Husayn. The visit is part of Christopher's second and most difficult and critical Middle East tour of the region. This is because of Israel's hard-line position on the peace process and its refusal to abide by the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, having abandoned its commitments therein. This is in addition to its refusal to issue an official commitment to withdraw from the Syrian Golan Heights in full, in line with the Madrid document and UN resolutions and in return for Syria's resumption of negotiations with Israel.

In an exclusive statement to AKHBAR AL-USBU', the Jordanian source said Jordan welcomes Secretary Christopher and reaffirms, at the same time, that it stands by its Palestinian, Lebanese, and Syrian brothers in their just demands that Israel respect its international commitments and fully abide by the resolutions of the United Nations and international legitimacy. This is very important, particularly since Jordan and the other Arab parties engaged in the peace process have offered everything to make the peace process succeed, only to receive promises in return.

Now, the Arabs have nothing new to offer Secretary Christopher except for previous assertions very much familiar to the U.S. Administration. These assertions are also included in the international resolutions which Washington pledged to achieve if the Arabs engaged in direct negotiations with Israel. The Arabs have done so, but Israel has failed to implement international resolutions.

The Jordanian source added that despite all the difficulties involved, Jordan is serious about the peace process. Jordanian- Israeli contacts are also continuing to help in the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement. Jordan wants to help the Palestinians so they can render the first phase of self-rule a success. This is not meant to help Israel challenge the international community, nor to secure Jordan's rights to land and water.

Jordan has said it will coordinate its political moves in this regard with the brothers in Syria and will not sign a comprehensive peace agreement with Israel, even if all the items of the Jordanian- Israeli agenda were approved one by one in individual agreements. Jordan will not sign a peace treaty because the peace His Majesty King Husayn wants is a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace that ensures the return of all usurped rights and one which future generations will accept, safeguard, and not feel ashamed of.

'Obstacles' to Peace With Israel Viewed

NC0212160293 Paris AFP in English 1440 GMT 2 Dec 93

[By Randa Habib]

[Text] Amman, Dec 2 (AFP)—Jordan and Israel must still overcome several obstacles before they can sign a peace treaty, a Jordanian official said Thursday [2 December] on the eve of a Middle East tour by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

"We do not foresee signing a peace treaty with Israel without first having resolved all the disputes with this country," a high-ranking government official told AFP on condition his name not be used.

Pending issues are the return of Jordanian land, sharing water, the future of Palestinian refugees in Jordan and economic issues.

"We will not put the cart before the horse," the official added.

Christopher is due in Israel Friday at the start of a tour to maintain momentum in the Arab-Israeli peace talks following the September 13 signing of a Palestinian autonomy accord in Washington.

Jordan on September 14 signed an agenda for peace aimed at an eventual treaty, but the official said "no serious progress has been made yet in the negotiations with Israel over the issues included in the agenda."

Western diplomatic sources in Amman said the United States was pressuring Jordan to sign an accord with Israel as soon as possible and discuss the details afterwards, following the model of the Palestinian accord.

An Israeli-Jordanian-U.S. team Wednesday ended its second meeting on economic issues in the U.S. capital by authorising the reopening of Jordanian banks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied by Israel since 1967.

The working team was formed during a meeting in Washington on October 1, between Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan Bin-Talal and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

The Jordanian official dismissed any public meeting soon between King Husayn and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, saying it would only amount to a "useless media show" as long as there was no progress in the talks.

Several Israeli officials had repeatedly referred to an imminent encounter between the two leaders to take place in Washington, but the Jordanian monarch later denied the rumours formally.

The Jordanian official disclosed that King Husayn planned a visit to the United States in mid-January where he would discuss with President Bill Clinton the latest developments in the Middle East peace process.

The king met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus last month in the framework of coordination among Israel's frontline neighbours. Al-Asad stressed the importance of cooperation between Lebanon, Syria and Jordan before signing any peace accord with Israel.

King Husayn also discussed the peace process with the Egyptian leader Husni Mubarak last month.

Jordan is claiming from Israel a 320-square-kilometre (128 square-mile) strip of land along the border between the Gulf of Aqaba and the Dead Sea and another 1.3 square-kilometres (0.52 square-miles) south of Lake Tiberias in the Jordan Valley.

Amman also wants to settle the fate of some two million Palestinian refugees in Jordan. Some 1.7 million fled their land during the two Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967 and another 300,000 left Kuwait in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of the Gulf emirate in August 1990.

Al-Majali Reviews Results of Peace Process

JN0212072793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has reviewed the Middle East peace process and the constants and principles of the Jordanian position toward this process, represented in the search for a just and comprehensive peace in the region acceptable to future generations.

In a lecture at the International Affairs Society, Dr. al-Majali said that so far the most important results of the peace process is the mutual recognition between the Palestinian and Israeli leaderships, and subsequently the recognition of the Palestinian people's existence and their unity inside and outside the occupied territories by Israel and the world countries.

Dr. al-Majali emphasized the need to bolster coordination between the Arab countries concerned with the peace process.

He referred to the U.S. secretary of state's forthcoming visit to the region, which aims to advance the peace process and overcome the obstacles facing it.

The prime minister reviewed the democratic march in the region and cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities aimed at rendering this march successful, and advancing it.

Dr. al-Majali spoke about the economic situation in Jordan and the growth rates realized, considered to be acceptable all over the world. He expressed confidence that Jordan will witness an economic boom next year, and called for utilizing this boom for the benefit of the development process in general.

Minister on Peace Talks, Coordination, Iraq

NC0312122293 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 24 Nov 93 p 3

[Interview with Jordanian Information Minister Ma'n Abu-Nuwar by Muwaffaq Madani in Amman; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Madani] How do you explain Jordan's position? While President Clinton is asking Jordan to make swift progress in the negotiations, senior Jordanian officials are saying that Jordan sticks to Arab rights and will not accept a separate deal with Israel.

[Abu-Nuwar] The king explained this repeatedly. He said Jordan believes in a comprehensive solution. It is not true that we may conclude a separate deal while our brothers in Jerusalem and the West Bank suffer or the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations yield no fruit. This is not possible; this has been Jordan's position from the beginning. We reached an agenda in our negotiations with Israel, probably after three sessions or in the fifth session, that is, about 18 months ago. But, following particular studies, we intentionally delayed the signing of the agenda until after our Palestinian brothers felt satisfied and capable of signing their own declaration of principles.

We did not know that our Palestinian brothers were holding talks in Oslo and elsewhere. This surprised us, but we kept our promise to our Palestinian brothers to wait for them. After they signed in Washington, we signed the agenda. This agenda is nothing more than a list of issues that we will negotiate. We supported the Palestinians in the past and will support them in the future.

We have no secret negotiations and we will yield to pressure from no one. But if Israel says this is your water, take it, should we say no? If it says it will hand over the occupied land south of the Dead Sea up to al-'Aqabah, should we say no?

Many issues are subject to discussion until things are completed and a comprehensive solution involving the Lebanese, the Syrians, and the Palestinians is achieved. A comprehensive solution would be better for the region, the Arab countries, Israel, and the world.

[Madani] What can Jordan propose to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he visits the region early in December?

[Abu-Nuwar] We will clearly present Jordan's position, which, I believe, will remain unchanged.

[Madani] Is Jordan coordinating with Lebanon and Syria and will it be committed to the negotiating Arab position in the 12th round of talks?

[Abu-Nuwar] Jordan is committed to the Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian brothers as agreed in the last meeting of the foreign ministers. We have changed nothing.

[Madani] Don't you believe that the signing of the [Jordanian-Israeli] declaration of principles constituted a change?

[Abu-Nuwar] No, not at all. We agreed with the Israelis on a program, not a declaration of principles. It is a list of the subjects to be negotiated. We have not negotiated over water, refugees, border, and so on.

[Madani] How do you view the possibility of establishing an Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian axis, confederation, or a form of regional economic cooperation after the Gaza-Jericho Agreement?

[Abu-Nuwar] This will be decided by the current negotiating process. I believe that very important and serious issues like Jerusalem, sovereignty over the Palestinian territory, water, land, and refugees must be addressed before we turn our attention to a Palestinian-Jordanian axis. But there are ongoing studies on all the issues—on water, electricity, energy, tourism, and transport. All these are being discussed in depth at the multilateral talks. [passage omitted]

[Madani] Do you think a possible Middle East settlement will endanger the identity of the Arab nation and its future as some say?

[Abu-Nuwar] I think the Arab nation's identity is what the Arab nation wants it to be. It is not imported. It exists in the conscience of the Arab nation and will be preserved. Neither Israel nor the entire world can change it. [passage omitted]

[Madani] How do you view Jordanian-Iraqi relations?

[Abu-Nuwar] From the Jordanian point of view, Jordan's relations with all the Arab states have not changed, despite the Gulf war and the problems that faced the Arab nation. Rest assured that King Husayn and the Jordanian Government's position have not changed toward any Arab state.

[Madani] Do you feel you made a mistake with your position on the Gulf war?

[Abu-Nuwar] We made no mistake. We called on Iraq to get out of Kuwait and called on the Arab states not to finish or destroy Iraq, but to try to find an Arab solution. We are not ashamed of this position; we see it as an important historical position for us as Arabs. We as Jordanians love the Arabs more than we love ourselves. We are Arab nationalists. Our position toward Kuwait is the same as our position toward Iraq. Our position toward Iraq is the same as our position toward Syria. Our position toward the three states is the same as our position toward fraternal Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, and all the fraternal Arab states. We do not give preference to one over the other.

[Madani] But haven't your relations with the Gulf states been put in order?

[Abu-Nuwar] For us, our position is a brotherly one. We are prepared to fulfill any promise we have made regarding the Arab League, the Arab common market, the economic agreements, and any other agreement we have made with any fraternal Arab state and, by the way, with any country. We will honor our pledges.

[Madani] Does Jordan believe in the establishment of an Arab common market to face the challenges of the future, as Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi has suggested?

[Abu-Nuwar] We believe in it as much as we believe in our Arabism. As Arabs, we believe in the need to amend the Arab League Charter and in the establishment of a supreme Arab court of justice to solve problems among the Arab states. We believe in Arab military, political, economic, cultural, and trade solidarity in the air, at sea, on land, and in every sphere. We believe in Arab ministerial councils to deal with every specialized field, the elimination of customs and tariffs, and the standardization of specifications, measures, and laws that can be standardized. We are ready to agree to anything on which the Arabs agree. [passage omitted]

[Madani] How do you view relations with Syria and Lebanon within the framework of the current difficult negotiations? There is a belief that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement violated the Arab coordination principle established among the cordon states.

[Abu-Nuwar] We cannot speak for our Palestinian brothers. On the Gaza-Jericho Declaration of Principles, they are free to make any decision and say what they want. But I can assure you that Jordan promises our Palestinian, Lebanese, and Syrian brothers that it will abide by the position of the comprehensive solution. We promised them this during the meeting of the Arab foreign ministers in Beirut. We uphold this decision.

[Madani] Will this position be reiterated to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher when he visits Jordan?

[Abu-Nuwar] As far as I know and believe, yes. This position will be reiterated at every stage until a final peaceful solution is achieved.

Israeli Commitment to Peace Accord Questioned

JN0112122393 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Dec 93 pp 1, 24

[Editorial: "Is There a Declaration of Principles?"]

[Text] Three months after the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles, the Middle East situation is a long way from the peace that was propagated by this declaration at the great international celebration, and which was welcomed by all world nations.

The situation in the occupied territories and the talks in Cairo, Taba, Paris, and elsewhere show that the Middle

East now is the same as it has been over the past long decades—a long way from the aspired peace.

We do not want here to refer to the familiar Israeli intransigence at the negotiations taking place in several cities and capitals, we refer specifically to the Israeli practices which have maintained their terrorist nature toward the people in the occupied territories before and after the signing of the Declaration of Principles.

Moreover, as the date for the unprecedented partial Israeli military withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and West Bank draws near, these terrorist practices have escalated to the point of prompting the legitimate question as to whether there is really a Declaration of Principles, and whether there will really be an Israeli withdrawal.

What happened in the Gaza Strip yesterday and what continued to take place after the Declaration of Principles was signed raises questions and doubts about the seriousness of what was celebrated and announced on the White House lawn, and what has been propagated about the beginning of a new stage for the peoples of this region.

Hence, we believe that Israel is maintaining its position that preceded the signing of the Declaration of Principles. We also believe that Israel intends to disavow certain points in that declaration, particularly the dates scheduled for implementing the phased stages of the agreement. This makes us wonder bitterly whether there is really an agreement and whether a withdrawl is possible. It also makes us ask whether peace can really be expected in this part of the world.

Estonian President Arrives on 4-Day Visit

JN0212202393 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Estonian President Lennart Meri and his wife have begun a four-day official visit to Jordan. The visit of his excellency the Estonian president to Jordan reaffirms the desire of the two countries' leaderships to establish the best relations regarding cooperation and friendship.

His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur al-Husayn led those who received His Excellency Estonian President Lennart Meri and his wife Mrs. Heli Meri upon their arrival at Queen Alia International Airport this evening. [paassage omitted]

After a short rest in the Royal Lounge, the motorcade left the airport for al-Hashemiyah Palace where President Meri will stay during his visit to the Kingdom. Later tonight, His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur will host a banquet in honor of the Estonian president and his wife.

Official talks between the two sides will begin on Saturday, [4 December].

King Addresses Banquet

JN0312071193 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Speech by Jordan's King Husayn at a dinner banquet hosted in honor of visiting Estonian president Lennart Meri, in Amman on 2 December—recorded, in English with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] Your Excellency President Lennart Meri, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests:

Peace be to you and may God's mercy and blessings be upon you. On behalf of myself and Queen Nur, I am very pleased to welcome you and Mrs. Meri and your accompanying delegation as dear guests and valued friends. I would also like to welcome you on behalf of the Jordanian people and government and express my pride in the ties that are being formed between our two countries supported by our common belief in the right of peoples everywhere to self-determination, respect of human rights, democracy, pluralism, and justice.

Your Excellency: We realize the importance of this meeting that is taking place at the highest levels between our two countries, especially that we have for several years now been witnesses to the deep transformations that the world has been undergoing and the universal democratic revolution that is currently under way. We, in this country, have stood beside the people who have fought for their liberty, independence, and sovereignty. Our stance is rooted deep in our history ever since my great grandfather al-Husayn Bin-'Ali, the leader of the Hashemite Arab Revolt, earlier in this century, called for freedom and the right to self-determination for all peoples at a time when the world was subject to unprecedented suffering of the First World War and the decades that followed.

Your Excellency, Madam: Our process of democratization in Jordan is one that is based upon our constitution and the National Charter which was approved in a universally representative national conference and blessed by people from all sectors of society. It represents pluralism in views, beliefs, and cultural and ideological terms and flows from our solid faith in the values of justice, equality, and respect for human rights. These values emanate from our nation's heritage, its noble message, and create a cultural role. Here, in Jordan, we are seeking with all possible means to solidify the bases of the democratic process. We hope that it will be an example and a model to be emulated, embodying our conviction that freedom, democracy, pluralism, and respect for human rights is a right of all people without exception.

Your Excellency Mr. President: The people of this region have for many years suffered from wars and struggles and it is time that they enjoy stability, security, and peace. As we assert our attachment to our firm beliefs concerning peace worldwide, we see that peace is an indivisible whole and that its principles must be the same. Thus, we believe that international peace will remain incomplete and international legitimacy be void of substance unless a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace is achieved in our region—one that will restore the legitimate rights of all Arabs to them, the foremost of these being the right of Palestinian people to self-determination, the Palestinian people to self-determination on their national soil on the bases of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

We in Jordan, assert our full support for the Palestinian people and their sole, legitimate representative, the PLO, with our respect for its independence and freedom of decision. We are hopeful, determined, and committed to the cause of peace that justice and understanding may prevail so that holy Jerusalem will become the symbol of peace and the place of pilgrimage for all those who believe in God, the followers of the three great monotheistic religions, the children of Abraham, and who have only God's sovereignty and none other shall be recognized over the holy sites.

Your Excellency: Many issues in this region, as well as in all countries that have begun developing since achieving their independence from colonial occupation, are still present. There is a need for profound international and regional cooperation in all fields, especially issues of development, debt, the environment, disarmament, the attainment of social justice, and above all, the guarantee of freedom, equality, security, stability, progress, and prosperity. It is for all this that we look forward to founding our relations on the basis of mutual respect and trust so that the opening of new horizons of cooperation between our countries in all aspects of life—political, economic, cultural, and social—to the benefit of both our peoples shall be explored.

Your Excellency Mr. President: On behalf of Queen Nur and myself, I would like to say, once again, how happy we are to receive you, Mrs. Meri, and your accompanying delegation as our dear and valued friends amongst us as the honored guests of all Jordanians.

We wish you and Mrs. Meri every future success and happiness. Your are most welcome.

Thank you very much indeed.

DFLP's Hawatimah Pays Visit to IAF

JN0312100193 Amman SHIHAN in Arabic 4 Dec 93 p 8

[Text] An informed source at the Islamic Action Front Party [IAF] has said that the visit which Nayif Hawatimah, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] secretary general, paid to the IAF was not made simply to congratulate the party on its election victory. Hawatimah also had a lengthy and heated discussion about developments in the Palestinian arena.

The source added that during his meeting with the Islamic leaders, Hawatimah praised their opposition to the peace process and espressed the desire that they would intensify that opposition.

It is said that Hawatimah's visit will open the way for secret agreements between the Islamists and leftist parties in Jordan, particularly Hashd [Jordanian People's Democratic Party] and the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party to set up a national opposition to the peace process, especially in the light of the growing number of settlement supporters in parliament.

Kuwaiti Denial of Entry Visas Protested

JN0112105493 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Dr. Muwaffaq al-Fawwaz, secretary general of the Jordanian Olympic Committee, has sent an urgent message to Antonio Juan Samaranch, head of the International Olympic Committee, protesting the Kuwait authorities refusal to grant entry visas to the Jordanian delegation, led by Minister of Youth Dr. 'Abdallah 'Uwaydat, to attend the Asian Olympic Council meeting, currently convening in Kuwait.

This measure conflicts with the rules and bylaws of the Asian Olympic Committee.

Dr. al-Fawwaz has sent copies of the protest message to 168 Asian, Arab, and international olympic committees.

Profiles of Newly Appointed Minister Outlined

JN0212102293 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2-3 Dec 93 p 3

[Profiles of New Cabinet Ministers]

[Text]

Fawwaz Abu-al-Ghanam—Minister of State.

Born in Ma'daba in 1933, Mr. Abu al-Ghanam holds a degree in law from Baghdad University 1956 and a doctorate in law from Leipzig University of Germany 1978.

He served as consultant at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, secretary general of the Ministry of Information 1967-1970), director general of the Tourism authority, governor of Ma'an and al- Karak, charge d'affaires at the Jordanian embassy in Baghdad, Damascus and Algeria, Ambassador to Egypt, Morocco and Greece, secretary-general at the Ministry of Information and adviser at the Prime Ministry office 1985 and turning to practising law.

Adib Halasah—Minister of Transport.

Mr. Halasah born in 1932 in al-Karak. He received his elementary and secondary education from the Bishops School and he obtained degree in law from Cairo University in 1956 and a master degree in law in 1970. He served as a judge in 1957 until now and was a member in the court of cassation.

'Adil Irshayd—Minister of State.

Mr. Irshayd was born in the West Bank in 1950 and studied in Janin schools, received a degree in law from Cairo University in 1978, practised law for a long time and then became head of the Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry in August 1991. He is member of the Jordanian Committee for the Restoration of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

Amin Mahmud—Minister of Culture.

Dr Mahmud was born in 1940, he holds a degree in history from 'Ayn Shams University of Egypt, masters in history from Georgetown University and a doctorate in history in 1972.

He worked for the University of Kuwait and later became president of the Jordan University for Women in 1991.

Dr. Rima Khalaf—Minister of Industry and Trade.

Mrs. Khalaf was born in Kuwait in 1953 and completed her school education in Amman before going to the American University of Beirut where she graduated in 1976 with a degree in economics. She went to Portland State University in the U.S. where she obtained a masters degree and a doctorate in system science economics in 1984.

Between 1985 and 1990, she worked for the Ministry of Planning and between 1990 and 1993 she served as head of the Jordan Exports Development and Commerical Corporation, and later became director general of the Amman Investment Corporation, a public-share-holding company.

'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Nusur—Minister of public works and housing.

Dr. al-Nusur was born in al-Salt in 1943 and he received a degree in medicine from 'Ayn Shams University in Cairo in 1969. He was elected as al-Salt mayor for three consecutive terms. (1980-1992).

Health Minister Gives Statistics on AIDS Cases

JN0112124793 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 1 Dec 93 p 32

[By Ayman 'Abd-al-Hafiz]

[Text] Health Minister Dr. 'Abd al-Rahim Malhas has said that in Jordan 23 people, mostly foreigners, have died as a result of AIDS since 1986.

In a statement to AL-DUSTUR, he said that those who contracted the disease in Jordan during the past stage are only 94, of which 62 are Jordanian citizens. Out of the 62 cases, 40 contracted the disease outside Jordan because they suffer from hemophilia, which requires regular blood transfusions.

He said that the remainder contracted the disease in Jordan during the same period.

Al-Hariri Comments on Dismissal of Employees

NC0212204093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Report by correspondent Yazbik Wahbah at B'abda Palace on 2 December—live or recorded]

[Text] The cabinet session at the B'abda Palace has ended. Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said afterward that the administrative reform issue ended peacefully. He added that the services of 1,800 absent employees have been terminated and that some 12 names have been added to the category-one list. The cabinet announced that it has agreed to dismiss the employees on the Bank of Lebanon [Central Bank] list. Al-Hariri said the surplus employees issue remains and that the status of these employees will be discussed by the Administrative Development Ministry, which will be formed in due time. He noted that administrative decentralization is among the government's future plans. He said that the lists of names submitted by the committees in charge of inspection, not by the ministers, have been referred to the Disciplinary Council.

Commenting on the living conditions, the prime minister spoke about the completion of contacts with the General Labor Federation and said the government is the arbiter between employers and employees, noting that the situation is not tense. He added that social allowances must be introduced, which is one of our long-term plans.

Hizballah Reacts to U.S. 'Allegations' on Role in Somalia

NC0312114093 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 19 Nov 93 p 10

[Text] Reacting to U.S. allegations on the presence of Hizballah members in Somalia, an official Hizballah source has made a statement emphasizing a host of constants. The most important are: "All nations reject the U.S. policy that is based on aggression and interference in the affairs of the region and many other countries. If there is hatred toward the Americans and rejection of their presence, this is not the stance of a particular party, but a conviction that all nations now hold, due to their old and renewed awareness of the American policy and its dangers."

Hizballah stressed: "The noble Somali people know their responsibilities and appreciate their interests. They need no external signs to decide what is appropriate for them or to discover that the American force in Somalia is not a peace force, but one of occupation and colonialism. The resistance against the American forces is a Somali resistance with nationalist motives, especially after the Americans revealed the truth of their aggressive intentions, persisted in shedding the blood of the Somali people, and helped starve the nation and fan the civil war."

Hizballah pointed out: "The Americans, primarily Clinton, admitted that their operations in Somalia went beyond their objectives, framework, and slogans. The Somalis have every right to confront these operations and they will find nothing but support and sympathy from the Arab and Muslim world."

Hizballah announced—as one of the constants—"its support for the wronged Somali people and their struggle and jihad against all the forces that seek to undermine their existence and subjugate them to new hegemony and colonialism."

Hizballah also warned that the American allegations are meant to justify the organized acts of aggression and oppression perpetrated by the American forces in Somalia, especially in light of reports that these forces are trying to tighten the siege on Mogadishu with a view toward launching a methodological campaign of genocide against the Somali people and the nationalist forces defending them.

Hizballah said through the official source: "This is a continuing tune. When Washington faces problems in some area, it accuses Hizballah of being behind them. We are greatly honored to have been one of the forces that confronted the American policies of hegemony and aggression. But we believe Washington, which is experiencing a crisis, thanks to its policy of interfering in more than one place in the region, is trying to twist problems in a way that suggests that the only obstacle to the American policy in the region is Hizballah and some other forces and that the American policy has no problem with most Arab and Muslim peoples and countries."

Criticism of Fadlallah Reported

NC0112143993 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 29 Nov 93 p 7

[Text] Leaflets have been distributed in Qom Theological Seminary [Howzeh-ye Elmiyah-ye Qom] attacking al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah and accusing him of aspiring to become a source of emulation, for which he is not qualified. The leaflets also accuse him of loving worldly matters and seeking media attention. Similar accusations were made in al-Zaynabiyah in Damascus.

Meanwhile, the Hizballah radio "Voice of the Oppressed," based in Ba'labakk, has broadcast [no date given, as published] an interview with Fadlallah in which he attacked Hizballah. This has left the impression, and hence the conclusion, that Hizballah is preparing to launch a campaign against Fadlallah for attacking the party in a public program.

Sources close to the Iranian groups say that a talk attributed to Fadlallah in which he expressed a new opinion regarding the story of Fatimah al-Zahra' [daughter of prophet Muhammad] has reached the supreme quarters in Qom, causing great resentment.

Junblatt Comments on Visit to Iran

NC0212125293 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Junblatt returned from Tehran last night following a visit during which he met with Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Parliamentary Speaker Natiq Nuri, Interior Minister Mohammad 'Ali Bisharati, Cooperation Minister and Revolutionary Guard Commander Muhammad Rida'i, and head of the Oppressed Organization Rafiq Dost.

During his meeting with Junblatt, the Iranian president emphasized the importance that the Iranian people attach to Lebanese issues. He also affirmed that the unity of the Lebanese people and coordination among the various mujahidin will ensure the establishment of peace and stability in Lebanon quickly, enabling the people to rebuild their country.

Junblatt Views Government, Peace Process, Rushdie

NC0312125593 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1000 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Progressive Socialist Party leader Minister Walid Junblatt has affirmed that he is on good terms with the prime minister. He added: But this does not mean that I am completely satisfied. It also does not mean that there is complete agreement between myself and the ministers. A change is necessary, but I think that the time is not appropriate. There are ministers whose existence or nonexistence in the government changes nothing.

In an interview published by AL-BILAD magazine, Junblatt added: We only hope that the government will respond positively to the workers' demands on reasonable and acceptable terms and will give this poor and large segment its rights, taking into account the situation in the treasury and security and political conditions. [passage omitted]

Asked about relations with Hizballah, he said: Relations are very good in all areas. These relations have existed for a long time.

Regarding the escalating Zionist repression, Junblatt said: The Zionists will not stop their escalation and repression. 'Arafat's remarks in this regard are strange. 'Arafat has become a captive of the so-called Gaza-Jericho agreement. What is strange is how two Hamas leaders were killed successively. Was this the result of the security cooperation between 'Arafat and his organization and the Zionists and between 'Arafat's security services and the Israeli security services?

Regarding his position toward the Palestinian groups, he said: I support them. They have launched a serious effort to confront the Gaza-Jericho agreement. Their endeavor is serious and should not be underestimated.

Asked whether he expects anything new and useful in the recent American activity, he said: We must not expect anything useful for the people from the West, the United States, and Israel. We must mobilize all available progressive, Islamic, and Arab forces against this political, economic, cultural, and military onslaught. We must prepare long-term plans because the issue will affect future generations. [Israeli Foreign Minister] Peres said in Italy that Iran is the primary enemy. This indicates that there are specific plots being hatched or that will be hatched against the Islamic Republic and revolution. In order to confront this, we must make efforts to close ranks. I think that there is ultimately no fear. There is a long history of sacrifice. But the road is long.

Regarding his view of President Clinton's meeting with author Salman Rushdie, Junblatt said: This is not a new position. It is a continuation of the Western-American positions to try to insult Islam. Salman Rushdie insulted the Muslims with the publication of his book and he must be punished.

PSP Criticizes Bishop's Comments

NC0312111693 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] An official source of the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] has made the following statement: The newspapers last Monday published remarks by Bishop Bisharah al-Ra'i, the local coordinator of the preparations for the ecumenical synod, in which he maintained that Lebanon's independence is shackled because it is subjugated to a non-Lebanese armed party.

Al-Ra'i called for liberating our territories from foreign armies, whether they are here in the form of an illegal occupation or on the strength of friendship, fraternity, and assistance. He also maintained that the Lebanese are forbidden to sit around the same table to hold a dialogue. He defended political sectarianism and called for disarming the national resistance, just as the militias have been disarmed, because resistance should be a Muslim-Christian responsibility, not merely Muslim. Bishop al-Ra'i wondered if the south was Muslim or Lebanese.

We are astonished at such remarks by the coordinator of the ecumenical synod, who at a past meeting stressed the spiritual content of ecumenical efforts toward unity and the importance of conducting a dialogue of amity, mutual service, and solidarity. We wish to declare to Reverend al-Ra'i that we will not engage in a debate with him about his response to PSP leader Walid Junblatt's statement concerning the Maronite Patriarchate. We reiterate our wish to see an Arab character restored to the Maronite Patriarchate as it used to be in the days of the late Patriarch al-Ma'ushi, as attested to by the martyr mentor Kamal Junblatt and acknowledged by Rev. al-Ra'i.

We wish, however, to emphasize the following. First, it is regrettable for Rev. al-Ra'i to equate the Israeli occupation—which entered our territory on a hostile mission facilitated by some well-known Lebanese political forces who destroyed national unity, the economy, and the infrastructure and tried hard to partition the country—and fraternal forces that entered Lebanon at the request of the legitimate authorities to prevent war and destruction, confront the partition scheme, and preserve unity. Equating the two is a contradiction of historical facts and a return to the attitudes that played a major role in provoking sedition. We hold Rev. al-Ra'i too worthy to play this tune again.

Second, we wish to ask Rev. al-Ra'i: Who is preventing the Lebanese people from sitting around a table and talking? Does the al-Ta'if Accord, which we agree with Rev. al-Ra'i is merely a transitional stage, prevent dialogue or has it actually permitted the revival of constitutional institutions as forums for dialogue and national reconciliation. For this reason we ask Rev. al-Ra'i: Who prevented some Lebanese from participating in the parliamentary elections and the government? Was not their boycott of the elections a call to halt all dialogue? Furthermore, are those who did not take part in the boycott and entered the Chamber of Deputies and the government not qualified to carry out such a dialogue?

Third, it is impermissible after all that has happened for someone to defend political sectarianism that the al-Ta'if Accord calls for abolishing. No one who professes to be civilized may advocate discrimination among citizens on the basis of their religious and ethnic affiliations. On the contrary, the age of exploiting sectarianism for political gain must end forever.

Fourth, we are astonished at the contradiction apparent in Rev. al-Ra'i's assertion that independence is shackled with chains—which we would certainly understand to mean the chains of the Israeli occupation—and his denial of the right of the resistance to fight occupation and his opinion that it is a sectarian Muslim militia. The resistance in the south is Muslim and nationalist. Its membership is open to everyone as long as one square inch of the homeland's territory remains occupied by the Israeli Army. Does it shame the Muslims and nationalists to resist the enemy and his puppets? Are we required to remain acquiescent to the occupation and beg the world community to help us implement UN Security Council Resolution 425, as Rev. al-Ra'i seems to want?

We wish to remind the revered father of a position formerly announced by the president of the Republic declaring that we will all turn into a resistance force unless Resolution 425 is implemented. Has the resolution been implemented so that Rev. al- Ra'i may call for collecting the weapons of the resistance?

We do not wish to interpret Rev. al-Ra'i's remarks as indicating positions that will return us to the former atmosphere of incitements that fed the war. We declare that the homeland's wounds are still open and we can do without the kind of talk that cost us dearly in the past. What we need is to establish frameworks and climates that can lead to real national unity.

Islamic Resistance Carries Out Operation in al-Rahrah

NC0212162893 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] The Islamic Resistance announced that it carried out an operation on an Israeli post in al-Rahrah region in the western al-Biqa' between (Shishin) and (Dayr Harfah). Artillery and machine guns were used in this operation. In response, the Israeli forces shelled the area where the operation was carried out and combed the Wadi Majdal Zun area. Israeli airplanes broke the sound barrier this morning over the capital.

Israel Makes Christopher Mission 'Difficult'

JN0312082993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 3 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In one of its articles, AL-THAWRAH writes about the provocative statements with which Israel receives envoys and heads of U.S. diplomacy, noting Secretary of State Christopher's tour of the region which will begin today.

AL-THAWRAH says: This is not the first time Israel receives U.S. envoys with statements of intransigence, stubbornness, and challenge which reflect the absolute rejection of peace, adherence to the occupation of Arab lands, insistence of not withdrawing from these lands, and determination to build more settlements in the Golan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip.

The paper adds: U.S. Secretary of State Christopher begins his tour of the region today to activate the peace process and remove the stalemate in the obstructed talks on the other tracks, particularly the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Hence, the existing bloody and criminal situation entrenched by Israel, in an attempt to go back on the Madrid formula, makes Christopher's mission a difficult one by making very serious obstacles.

AL-THAWRAH notes that unless Israel is forced to comply with the terms of reference of the peace process and peace requirements, abide by the Security Council resolutions and their implementation on all fronts, accept the content of the U.S. initiative calling for exchanging land for peace, and fully withdraw from the Golan and southern Lebanon, it will be difficult to achieve anything on the path of genuine peace or to give momentum to its stumbling process.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH notes that current events have shown that the Oslo accord is fragile and have affirmed that nothing can be achieved from behind the Palestinian people and their will and that separate solutions have never been the right path to achieve peace.

Commentary Urges 'Total Withdrawal' From Golan

JN0312153193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is about to begin a new tour of the Middle East in an effort to promote the peace process. This process is foundering due to the Oslo deal. It is also foundering because Israel is trying to disavow the Madrid formula, both in regard to the formal aspects and the publicity surrounding the negotiations, and the need for the tracks to proceed together. Informed sources in Washington have said Warren Christopher will focus on the paralyzed negotiating tracks, particularly the Syrian-Israeli track, and that he is carrying new proposals and ideas in this regard.

Obviously, Christopher will make his tour in order to save the process. He made his last visit for a similar reason, after Israel sent large forces into southern Lebanon and displaced tens of thousands of innocent civilians, destroying efforts for peace under the guise of guaranteeing the security of the northern settlements.

Today is the same as yesterday. Nothing has changed, despite the signing of the unilateral Oslo deal. The deal, about which Israel deliberately raised much uproar, has damaged peace. It is a disaster for the Palestinian people, who have been exposed to an increasing siege and whose strugglers are being pursued, regardless of their differing positions. They are rebelling against the suspect deal, escalating their brave intifadah against the occupation in order to stress their national rights and to adhere to the terms of just peace in the region.

We believe everybody knows the Oslo deal, which was struck apart from the Washington talks, avoiding the fundamentals and requirements of the peace process, has harmed the cause of peace and severely damaged prospects for a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Immediately after the deal, Israel declared negotiations with Syria could wait and that it was not in a hurry to bring peace to the Golan. Since the signing of the agreement with the Palestinian side in Washington, Israel has been disseminating reports that peace has prevailed in the region and that Arabs should lift their boycott and establish full relations with it, without waiting for a settlement with Syria and Lebanon. It accused Syria of intransigence in order to justify the halt to the negotiations.

But the smoke of deception has been dispersed. The international community has discovered that the Oslo deal is revolving in a vicious circle. There will be no stability in the Middle East without the just and comprehensive peace for which Syria has been calling. Everybody has discovered that the proposals Syria made at the end of the sixth round of talks in Washington are a firm basis for real peace in the region. Any talk about peace excluding Syria is a waste of time.

Israel's total withdrawal from the Golan as a result of public negotiations, as Syria insists, is a basic prerequisite for any progress in the peace process. Israel's withdrawal from the Golan will symbolize the Tel Aviv rulers' agreement to apply Security Council resolutions and end their expansionist plans. Israel's withdrawal from the Golan will entrench the principle of withdrawal from all the occupied territories and will lead to the cancellation of all forms and manifestations of the occupation. This in itself will be a victory for the international community, the resolutions of international legitimacy, and will emphasize international law.

In order to make U.S. Secretary of State Christopher's tour successful, the parties involved should return to the bases of the Madrid conference and to the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The United States should put its commitments in this regard into effect. Any progress in the Syrian-Israeli track is linked to Israel's clear commitment to the principles of total withdrawal. What applies to the Golan applies to other tracks. Peace cannot be built by playing tricks and striking suspect deals that will not be approved by the region's peoples. Peace will be achieved by applying Security Council resolutions, ending the occupation, regaining the usurped territories, and through Israel's full respect of international laws and charters. The Oslo deal crisis should teach an eloquent lesson to those who are concerned about establishing a firm, comprehensive, and true peace in the Middle East.

Afghanistan

Kabul Garrison Launches Crackdown on Crime

LD2911203193 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 29 Nov 93

[Text] Is the Kabul garrison general command capable of preparing further confident conditions of living for Kabul citizens? A military reporter of the Bakhtar Information Agency writes in this regard:

Serious movement has been witnessed for some time now in the ranks of units of the [Kabul] garrison and other security organs in the city, that are indicative of the further strengthening of order and discipline in the ranks of the above-mentioned posts [as heard]. The creation of stationery and mobile posts, the organization of 24-hour patrols, and the prevention of a series of incidents have become the cause of renewed attention by Kabul citizens at the activities of the security officials of the country. By creating more than 450 posts in various parts of the city, the Kabul garrison has so far succeeded in—with the cooperation of other security organs and the people of Kabul—preventing a series of incidents taking place.

General Baba Jan, the acting commander of the Kabul garrison, said in this connection: The staff of the Kabul Garrison have succeeded so far in seizing more than 200 pieces of assorted weapons that were being transported illegally and with proper documents [sentence as received]. Also 43 state and private vehicles that had been stolen have been recovered. Some 17 ambulances have returned to hospitals after being recovered.

He added: Our staff have captured 13 terrorists and found 31 cases of kidnapping. Some 18 of those who had been kidnapped, have been returned to their families. Also it has uncovered 24 armed robberies along with 27 robbers who have been handed over to the law. Furthermore, as a result of the activity of the Kabul garrison personnel and other security organs, 27 explosion incidents were prevented from being carried out in Kabul city population centers.

The military correspondent adds that the creation of military posts in Kabul city is an objective necessity of our society. War necessities have caused the fact that soldiers are seen more and more in the city's crossroads. Those against security in the city have begun to protest in this connection.

Colonel Mohammad Aref, a commander of Kabul garrison units, says in this regard: If the opposition refrains from subversive actions and the existing unease is eliminated, the ground will be prepared for the soldiers to leave the city and return to their bases.

In connection with the activities of Kabul garrison, one Kabul citizen says that, despite shortcomings in the work of the garrison personnel and other security organs, Kabul citizens look with appreciation on the work and activities of the garrison because those responsible for the garrison have succeeded, despite disruption by the opposition groups, to bring order to Kabul city and foil numerous conspiracies that were causing disorder.

Bangladesh

Cease-Fire in Chittagong Hill Tracts Extended

BK0112142993 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 25 Nov 93 p 1

[By Khagrachari correspondent]

[Text] The government committee on the Chittagong Hill Tracts [CHT] and the CHT People's Solidarity Council yesterday agreed to extend the cease-fire in the CHT until 31 January 1994 with a view to continuing the dialogue for a peaceful settlement of the CHT problem. The current cease-fire expires on 30 November. The two sides also agreed to hold the seventh round of talks during the last week of January. After the conclusion of the sixth round of dialogue yesterday, leaders of both sides told newsmen that the talks were held in a peaceful and cordial atmosphere. The government side was led by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed while the tribal delegation was led by Santu Larma. They further said that the talks will continue to seek a peaceful and acceptable solution to the tangle.

The closed-door meeting was held from 11 in the morning until four in the afternoon at the Khagrachari District Circuit House. For the first time the five point demands raised by the People's Solidarity Council were discussed during this meeting. Briefing reporters, the leader of the government delegation, Oli Ahmed, expressed optimism and said that a lot of progress has been made during the talks. He said that it has been possible to reduce the differences between the two sides. Ahmed further said that the overall situation in the CHT has improved. He said that it is not possible to resolve the CHT tangle through the use of arms and manpower. Replying to a question, the leader of the government delegation said that the problems relating to the land of the tribals will be resolved once the land survey work is completed. He added that the People's Solidarity Council has created obstacles in this regard. Ahmed asserted that the land of the tribals is not under the occupation of others. Regarding the five point demands raised by the tribals, the minister said that he has sought the opinion of his committee members in this regard.

The leader of the People's Solidarity Council, Santu Larma, told reporters that discussions were held on their five point demands. He said the government committee has not given its opinion regarding their demands and has sought more time. Referring to the recent incidents of violence in Naniarchar of the CHT, Larma said that in a democratic country everyone has the right to launch a movement. He added that if this movement turns to violence then it is very unfortunate. Larma called on all to remain alert to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

Wajed Reviews Visit to PRC

BK2011072693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0536 GMT 20 Nov 93

[Text] Dhaka, Nov 20 (AFP)—Bangladeshi opposition leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed returned home from her first trip to China Saturday, and said she had proposed to Chinese officials the formation of a regional cooperation group.

Speaking to reporters on her return from the ten-day visit, Wajed said she had proposed the formation of an organisation of Asian countries for strengthening cooperation in the fields of economy, diplomacy, trade and culture during meetings with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders.

China could play a "pioneering role" in the formation of the proposed continental body, said Wajed, who is leader of the opposition in parliament and heads her Awami League (AL) party.

She did not elaborate on her proposal or say what response she got from her hosts, but the Daily Star quoted her as saying that the proposed Asian body would not conflict with the South Asian cooperative body SAARC, founded in 1985 with Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka as members.

Wajed is the first major leader of AL, which led this former eastern province of Pakistan to become Bangladesh after the 1971 war of independence during which China sided diplomatically with Islamabad.

Beijing finally recognised Bangladesh after the Soviet-leaning post-independent AL government of Wajed's father and the nation's founding leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was toppled in a bloody 1975 coup.

Wajed, who praised China for achieving rapid economic growth by pursuing a mixed police, said Bangladesh "had a lot to learn from the Chinese economy.

Awami League Chief: China Visit 'Fruitful'

BK2511115393 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 20 Nov 93 p 1

[ITTEFAQ Report]

[Text] The president of the Awami League and leader of the opposition in the parliament, Sheikh Hasina, returned to Dhaka yesterday after a two-week visit to China. After her arrival at the Dhaka International Airport, Sheikh Hasina told newsmen that her visit was very fruitful. The Awami League chief said that she had had official talks with Hu Jintao, who is a senior leader of the ruling Chinese Communist Party. She said that the Chinese Communist Party leader expressed the hope of improving ties with the Awami League. During the talks, Sheikh Hasina proposed that China should play a leading role in the establishment of peace in the Asian region. The Awami League leader was received at Dhaka Airport by senior leaders of her party and the Chinese ambassador, Zhang Xujiang.

Sheikh Hasina said she had paid the visit to China 40 years after the visits made by former Awami League leaders Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman [Hasina's father and former president] to that country. The Awami League leader said that her visit has opened up new vistas for the strengthening of relationship between the people of Bangladesh and China. When questioned about the role played by China during the war of independence in Bangladesh, the Awami League chief replied that at present there is a new leadership in China. She further said that the former president, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, wanted to develop ties with China on the basis of mutual respect. The Awami League chief added that later, on the basis of this, China established relationship with Bangladesh.

The Awami League leader said that are many things for us to see and learn from China. She said that China has adopted a new policy on the economic front. The Awami League leader said that by following a coordinated policy of socialism and a free market economy, China has achieved tremendous success and has been able to increase the economic growth rate. She said that her party has also adopted the policy of a free market economy with a view to freeing the country from the scourge of poverty. Sheikh Hasina said that her party believes that this new policy will help in the economic emancipation of the people.

It may be mentioned that Sheikh Hasina left for China on November 5 at the invitation of the ruling Communist Party. Among others, the members of Hasina's entourage included the deputy leader of the opposition in the parliament, Abdus Samad Azad; S.A.M.S. Kibria; Abul Hasan Chowdhury MP; and her daughter Saima Wajed. Party leaders who were present at the airport to receive Sheikh Hasina included Abdul Mannan; Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, MP; Zillur Rahman; Salahuddin Yusuf, MP; Amir Hossain Amu; Abdur Razzak, MP; Tofayel Ahmed, MP; Mohammed Nasim, MP; Muzaffar Hossain Paltu; Professor Abu Sayeed; Obaidul Kader; Mohammed Hanif: Dr. Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin; Shudangshu Shekhar Haldar MP; Rahmat Ali MP; Ivy Rahman; Abdul Mannan; Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya; the Chatra League [student front of the Awami League] president, Moinuddin Hossain Chowdhury; and the Chatra League general secretary, Iqbalur Rahim.

India

Li Ruihuan Meets Dixit; Experts Group To Meet

BK0212011293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Text] The first meeting of the India-China Expert Group will be held next year. This was agreed upon at a meeting between the Chinese foreign minister, Mr.

Ruihuan and the foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, in New Delhi today. The expert group was set up to deal with bilateral issues following peace and tranquility agreements signed between the two countries during Mr. Narasimha Rao's visit to China. These include determination of the Line of Actual Control, force reduction, and confidence building measures. The two sides finalized the composition of the expert group and agreed to tackle these issues in a constructive, forward looking manner.

The chairman of the Chinese People Political Consultative Conference, Mr. Li Ruihuan, called on the president at Rashtrapati Bhavan [president house] today.

Commentary Views Progress in Ties

BK0312105793 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Commentary by columnist N.K. Ray]

[Text] The relations between India and China are poised for further improvement. The seriousness with which the visiting Chinese high-level team led by the vice foreign minister, Mr. Li Ruihuan, are working with the Indian counterpart speaks of seriousness in their mission to improve relations between the two countries. The India-China Expert Group representing Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense would be meeting early next year to deal with various issues arising out of the agreement on maintenance of peace and tranquility along the Line of Actual Control—LAC—and reduction of forces, in addition to other confidence-building measures. This scope on expanding bilateral cooperation in fields like trade, agriculture, science and technology depends on mutual trust and faith that would emerge once LAC—Line of Actual Control—between India and China is properly defined. Wherever there is any doubt in the spirit of give and take, the status quo is to be maintained till the border dispute is solved through a dialogue. This will be through mutual cooperation and understanding. The two countries can also work closely to achieve socoeconomic development. Mr. Li Ruihuan, who met President Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Prime Minister Mr. Narasimha Rao, Minister for External Affairs Mr. Dinesh Singh, and others, conveyed his government's happiness over the improvement in the recent past in the relations between the two countries.

Both the countries are faced with common challenges and common tasks. Liberalization in the two countries opens many new areas of cooperation of mutual benefit. The sentiments expressed by Mr. Li Ruihuan, chairman of the National Committee of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, in a meeting with Mr. Dinesh Singh that the Chinese people and government believed that India was a friendly neighbor which posed no threat to China conveys the changed approach between the two countries.

A new turn in Indo-China relations began with the signing of an agreement early this year which is likely to consolidate peace and tranquility on the border between the two countries. The agreement, which was an impressive victory for Indian diplomacy, makes the beginning of a new phase in bilateral relations based on mutual confidence and better political understanding. Under this agreement, the two sides had reiterated their commitment to resolving the boundary question through consultations and without the use of threat of force against the other. Where there are differences on the alignment of the LAC, experts from the two sides will jointly check and determine where the LAC lies. This is in addition to the measures already taken by India-China Joint Working Group in this direction such as exchange of views by military establishments, meeting of border personnel, and establishment of direct telecommunication links on the border. In fact, the agreement is another step in confidence-building measures. The working out of verification measures has been left to Joint Working Group or Sub-group.

The real test of Chinese intentions will be the country's attitude to Pakistan. After the end of the Cold War, India hopes that China would realize the dangers to Indian security by the supply of sophisticated weapons to Pakistan. In fact, after the Cold War, China has emerged as the biggest arms supplier to Pakistan nullifying the U.S. embargo under Pressler Amendment. The supply of M-11 and M-9 missiles is a clear example. There are other and very important areas where cooperation between the two countries is required and in a significant way. Besides trade, regarding which the two countries have already decided to extend further, agreement on environmental cooperation on bilateral as well as on global issues such as biodiversity and protection of ozone layer, water management, pollution control, wildlife conservation, and prevention of trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora would help develop better under understanding of each other's problems.

'Gap' Between Government, U.S. Seen Widening

BK0212152793 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 27 Nov 93 p 13

[Editorial: "Amending Pressler"]

[Text] The Clinton administration's move to rescind the Pressler Amendment which has denied Pakistan military and economic aid since October 1990 is not surprising in the context of recent U.S. actions aimed at rehabilitating Islamabad as a trusted strategic ally. However, because of that, it does not become less of a cause for worry. According to the State Department spokesman, the Pressler Amendment has not achieved the goals of nonproliferation and, therefore the need has arisen for a law in its place which will not be country specific. He forgot that it was only after the stoppage of military and economic aid in 1990 that Pakistan became candid about having developed a nuclear weapon. Former Premier Moin Qureshi repeated recently that Pakistan had no option but to develop a nuclear weapons capability to deter India since the suspension of American aid had made it inferior to its neighbour in conventional arms. Lest the State Department spokesman should be believed for his statement that the Pressler "standards" would continue to be applied to Pakistan under the proposed law, it cannot be ignored that the new law, unlike the present one, will allow the President to use the discretion of a waiver. Thus the spokesman's assurance does not add up to anything beyond a verbal consolation from a government that has been consistently reversing its position without admitting to do so. Only the other day, a senior U.S. official dismissed the charge that the Pressler law was discriminatory against Pakistan, and rejected the suggestion to bring New Delhi also within its ambit by saying that Washington does not have a comparable aid relationship with India. In the background of all this, and of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's declaration that Pakistan will not roll back its nuclear programme, the move to rescind the Pressler Amendment effectively means that Islamabad will be enabled to significantly add to its conventional armoury without being compelled to abandon its nuclear weapons programme.

This is the key question that should cause India some worry. So far, the Clinton administration's policy of even-handedness in South Asia has not been seen in clearer terms than in the myriad props the U.S. has provided to help Pakistan match India militarily. Such a policy could perhaps be explained in the cold war days when the U.S. armed Pakistan on the plea that it was an ally against the Soviet Union. In today's unipolar world, Pakistan is a staunch ally of the new super power in the making, China, and has no adversarial relationship with Russia, still a great military power. There is little justification to provide Pakistan with military aid unless it is to bog India down to regional conflicts. The rescinding of the Pressler Amendment carries the danger of providing a fresh impetus to the arms race in South Asia, the avoidance of which is supposedly an avowed American aim. Clearly, the gap between U.S. policy makers and the Government of India is widening.

Kashmir Talks Under UN Resolution Ruled Out

BK0212162493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] India today ruled out any discussions with Pakistan on the Kashmir issue under the 1948 UN resolution. Replying to questions by newsmen, the spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said India considers the UN resolution to be irrelevant. Referring to a report published today in a section of the press quoting the foreign secretary, Mr. J.N. Dixit, as saying that India could consider such a possibility, the spokesman said it is an inaccurate reflection of what the foreign secretary has said. Mr. Dixit, he asserted, had wondered whether it would be realistic to expect Pakistan to abide by the UN resolution and vacate the part of Kashmir occupied by it and hand over its administration to India.

BJP's Khurana Sworn In as Delhi Chief Minister

BK0212140093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Madanlal Khurana, was sworn in as the chief minister of the national capital territory of Delhi this evening. The oath of office and secrecy was administered by Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Mr. P.K. Dave at Raj Nivas [lieutenant governor's residence]. The Council of Ministers will be sworn in tomorrow as the presidential assent is yet to be received. Before the swearing in ceremony, the presidential notification appointing Mr. Khurana as the chief minister was read out.

Iran

Envoy Urges IAEA Supervision of Nuclear Sites

NC0312083093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] Yesterday, Iran's permanent representative at the United Nations strongly criticized the UN Security Council's approaches to the Middle East and Palestinian problems during the past 40 years. Describing the Palestinian problem as the root of all the Middle East's problems, he said: The vindication of the Palestinian nation's rights and the full withdrawal of the Zionist regime from all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories are the only ways to return peace, stability, and mutual trust to the Middle East.

Kamal Kharrazi, who was speaking at a UN General Assembly session on Middle East problems, referred to the continuing occupation of the Golan Heights and south Lebanon by the Zionist regime and described the struggle by the people in south Lebanon as resistance against the aggressor and called for the international community's support for this struggle.

Our country's representative at the United Nations pointed to the Zionist regime's extensive efforts to strengthen its military structure and said: The Islamic Republic of Iran profoundly believes in creating an area free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In view of UN support for this proposal, it considers the best way to achieve this objective is to have the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA] observe all nuclear installations and nuclear research centers in the Middle East. Kharrazi stated: As long as the Middle East's problems are not approached radically and the IAEA is not observing all nuclear installations and centers in the Middle East, the region's countries will see their national security threatened.

Kamal Kharrazi described cooperation among the Persian Gulf countries within the framework of sovereignty, territorial integrity, the nonviolability of international borders, the nonuse of force, and noninterference in each other's domestic affairs as the only way to ensure security and stability in the Persian Gulf.

Our representative at the United Nations rejected the remarks by the European Community's representative calling on the Islamic Republic of Iran to review its stance on the accord between 'Arafat and the Zionist regime and to lift the decree to execute Salman Rushdie, the apostate author of *The Satanic Verses*, and, referring to this author's insult to Islamic sanctities and to 1 billion Muslims, he said: How can those who shed crocodile tears for human rights and freedom of speech justify their support for the violation of all religious principles and norms and social modesty and the abuse of the freedom of speech? He added: Insulting any divine religion is unacceptable and the world should condemn it. Kharrazi said: Not only Iran, but every Islamic country, has condemned Salman Rushdie's insult to the holy religion of Islam and the foreign ministers of the Islamic Conference Organization issued a joint communique at their 18th session in which they strongly condemned the writing and publication of the blasphemous *Satanic Verses* and stated that its author Salman Rushdie is an apostate.

Reports of Missile Test Agreement With DPRK Denied

LD0212161293 Tehran IRNA in English 1543 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran Dec. 2, IRNA—An informed political source here Thursday [2 December] categorically denied Western circles claim on conclusion of a long-range missile test treaty between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Recently some American and European media carried reports on the likelihood of Pyongyang's selling long-range Scud missiles to Tehran as well as testing of the Nodong-1 missiles in Iran.

The Iranian source reiterated that Tehran and Pyongyang have signed no contract either on testing or purchase of long-range missiles.

Experts believe that bringing up of such issues aims at intriguing the regional states, the rich Arab states in particular, to purchase more Western arms. He further added that launching of the so-called joint maneuvers of the Persian gulf littoral states with Western countries are also in this direction.

He made it clear that manufacture and purchase of conventional weapons for defending the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran is very natural.

He said the West by raising such fabricated news aims at intriguing an arms race in the region.

President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in his recent interview with Egyptian journalist, Hassanain Haykal, said that Iran enjoys a powerful missile technology.

Muslim Reaction to Clinton-Rushdie Meeting Viewed

NC0212182493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary: "President Clinton's Views on Salman Rushdie"]

[Text] President Bill Clinton made an ostentatious move to mislead the Islamic public [word indistinct] his meeting with renegade Salman Rushdie, the author of *The Satanic Verses*, last week. In a statement the day before yesterday, Clinton claimed that his intention was to defend freedom of thought. He said he didn't want to insult Muslims.

Despite President Clinton's statement, the Muslims regard Salman Rushdie's book as a direct insult to their faith. They believe that supporting an author like Salman Rushdie is tantamount to supporting those who insult humanity. That approach cannot be defined as a move to defend freedom of thought.

President Clinton has moved to defend himself after his incautious initiative. Why he has done so should be considered. The Western press and other media tried to convince the world that Iran was the only country to insist on punishing Salman Rushdie. But most Muslims called for penalizing all those who dared to defame the prophet Muhammad. According to the basic principles of the Islamic faith, Muslims cannot remain indifferent to the defamation of the prophet.

Realizing that his meeting with Salman Rushdie caused an angry reaction among the Muslims in various countries, President Clinton tried to calm the Islamic public by declaring that he did not intend to insult what is sacred in Islam. But President Clinton is worried about the possible outcome of his initiative. It is a remote possibility that President Clinton attaches importance to the faith of the Muslims.

Several statements made by President Clinton before he met Salman Rushdie indicate that his aides told him his initiative would be seen as an insult to the Islamic peoples. Former U.S. Presidents confirmed that their approach toward Islamic countries aimed at safeguarding long-term U.S. interests and had nothing to do with religious values.

For the Islamic peoples, the United States is the most important factor restricting freedom. So President Clinton's claim that he received Salman Rushdie for the sake of defending freedom of thought is not valid.

Obviously, the Muslims' angry reaction has forced the White House to take particular measures. Undoubtedly, Clinton and his aides must have realized that the Islamic people cannot remain indifferent to the support given to an author like Salman Rushdie. They must have also realized that the support given to that author will be seen as a bid to create confusion. Obviously, the Islamic people will react appropriately to President Clinton's meeting with Salman Rushdie.

President Interviewed on Egypt, Regional Issues

NC0212093093 Beirut Tele-Liban Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 28 Nov 93

["Open Dialogue" with President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by Egyptian writer Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal on the "Face To Face" program in Tehran; date not given—recorded; Hashemi-Rafsanjani speaks in Persian with superimposed Arabic translation]

[Text] [Haykal] I am pleased and honored to come to Iran once again. I have visited Iran several times before and have met with Iranian leaders at different historical periods. It pleases me to come this time when you are the head of state. I would like to begin with a typical Egyptian greeting with which we begin the day; that is, good morning.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Thank you. Welcome.

[Haykal] I can see that you understand the Arabic language. I come from Cairo and I would like to talk about Egypt. I have always sought healthy Egyptian-Iranian relations. I believe that there are two states in this region that can play a special role and that possess a unique cultural value. This value does not make them superior to others but carries with it certain responsibilities. These two states are Egypt and Iran. This fact has existed since the dawn of history. Since I come from Cairo, it concerns me that political relations between Egypt and Iran are not what I would want them to be for no obvious reason. I know that there were contacts between the two states and that our ambassador and your ambassador in Geneva met several times and arranged for a meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries to pave the way for further steps later on. What happened?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] As you said, we also believe that Egypt and Iran, with their history and the resources available to them, can play a significant role in the Islamic world. When Egypt was afflicted with the Camp David tragedy, I felt that the bulwark of the Arab and Islamic world was temporarily taken away from Arabs and Muslims. That was what started the split between us.

We counted on Egypt as the strongest point in the jihad to liberate and save Palestine. We regrettably received the heaviest blow ever from the very source we had relied on for strength. At the time, we said that the Palestinian resistance's backbone was broken.

We believe that the core of our problem with Egypt lies in the fact that we expect Egypt to lead the jihad for the sake of Palestine. Unfortunately, we now see Egypt leading those who are trying to disperse the ranks that should be organized to save Palestine.

Of course, when I say Egypt I mean the Egyptian Government, the Egyptian regime, and not that country in its entirety because we hold Egypt in great esteem.

I believe that there is no need to pursue the point any further. You can think of the matter in that perspective. You can consider the matter and look for the critical point in this particular perspective and not in any other.

[Haykal] Allow me to add a brief comment. You relieved me when you talked about Egypt as such. My views when it comes to Camp David might not be different from yours. I expressed these views in Egypt. However, there is a difference between the historic roles nations and peoples play in various geographic and historical situations and in policies that might be warranted by certain circumstances. I do not believe that different visions and views can affect relations. In other words, Egypt and Iran must at least maintain the minimum level of relations necessary for dialogue between them. I understand your position on Camp David; it is my position as well. I understand your discontent with the Egyptian policy and with the harm inflicted on the Arab and Muslim nation since Camp David. The point is that these are political realities, but they do not mean the end of history. Egypt will continue to exist and dealing with it will continue to be a necessity. This contact must be conducted through its government, in the same way that contact is made with America, Germany, England, or any other government. We may disagree with all these countries, but dealing with them might be necessary.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I am not opposed to this idea. This is my personal view. I have stated this position through the media more than once. I believe that there should be a dialogue between Iran and Egypt. Of course, there are those in Iran who oppose this position, but I stick to my position. I believe that we should have a dialogue with Egypt so that we may be able to put things right.

[Haykal] I would like to add something. Your excellency said that there are opposing groups in Iran. There are also opposing groups in Egypt and their stance is that Iran commits acts in Egypt that can be described as terrorist. It is said that Iran funds terrorist acts hostile to the Egyptian Government. I remember that I had a discussion with the Egyptian People's Assembly speaker in the presence of the National Democratic Party secretary general and the People's Assembly International Relations Committee secretary general on the subject. I defended Iran. I heard opposing views. The Egyptian People's Assembly speaker told me that there is evidence proving that Iran commits such acts and asked why I defended Iran. I told him that I would believe it when I saw the evidence. He then asked me on what basis I made my claim. I told him that there are several reasons. The first reason is that I know that Iran wants good ties with Egypt and has no need to fund or encourage terrorist acts. I said that the second important reason is that the necessities of the state in Iran have somehow toned down the concepts and ambitions of the revolution. This is natural because revolutions usually begin with dreams about changing the world. The revolutionaries then learn from circumstances that they need to dilute their harsh verdicts. The third reason I gave was that when you want to accuse an individual, you detain him and then interrogate him to get facts. But when you accuse a state you must first produce evidence. So far, I have not found convincing evidence in Egypt. This is my view and I would like to hear yours.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] This is just an accusation. Everyone in the world who is opposed to Iran makes this accusation against Iran. No one has succeeded in proving this and no one ever will. True, we do not need inhuman acts to set forth our views. You may not find any country in the world that has suffered from acts of terror more than Iran. We have suffered a great deal from terrorism. As a result of terrorism we lost the elite of our friends and comrades with whom we were detained in the jails of the defunct regime. They were our friends and comrades in struggle and the jihad. We lost them as a result of acts of terror by those who received aid from abroad. There are still scars of bullets on my chest and stomach. His eminence the revolution commander was injured in his right hand and body as a result of an explosive charge that went off as he was delivering a speech. The charge was planted on the forum. Explosive devices were also detonated among congregations during the Friday prayers. These devices were sent as presents from agents abroad. The terrorists admitted that they were in the United States, Paris, Iraq, and even Egypt and that they were under protection.

[Interpreter, at Hashemi-Rafsanjani's request, changes Arabic translation of preceding sentence] Those terrorists have admitted to the crimes they committed in Iran and assumed responsibility for these crimes and acts, and they are now present in the United States, Paris, Iraq, and even in Egypt. These same people have a radio that broadcasts their programs. But you can never find such things in Iran. If we want to get into mutual complaints, we could also voice a major complaint about the Egyptians' unlimited aid to the Iraqi regime during the latter's aggression against Iran. But we do not take interest in this particular side of the issue. The main point for us is the Palestinian issue and Palestine itself.

[Haykal] Before I move to the Palestinian issue, I would like to tell you that I quite understand his excellency the president's remarks and am happy for his correction of the Arabic translation. There was a correction of the Arabic translation, so I can say that you can understand the Arabic language well.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in Arabic] Yes.

[Haykal] Excellent. I wish it were possible to have this dialogue in Arabic, but I understand the circumstances. Before I move away from the issue of terrorism, I would like to raise one issue. This issue is constantly being voiced against Iran in the Western world. I hope you will bear with me on this point, which I know has been raised many times before. I also know that many parties are trying to take advantage of this issue, which is the question of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses.* I could add that I do not support what Salman Rushdie said. I remember that when this book was published and the uproar over it started, its publishers in London contacted me and wanted to have my name on a statement supporting Salman Rushdie's position. I asked the board chairman of a publishing house, (Andre Deutsch), not to put my name on this statement because I am not a supporter. This is because I believe that Salman Rushdie made a mistake. He asked me over the telephone: Are you against freedom of imagination? I answered: I am not against freedom of imagination, but in literary and artistic works the freedom of imagination must have objectives, either to portray an image or to uphold a value or an idea. But if the image is devoid of value or a message, then it means employing the imagination within a horrible vacuum. So I object to what he has written, but I believe that a person like Salman Rushdie has a right to say what he wants without it being afforded much importance. My understanding, Mr. President, and I hope I am not mistaken, is that Imam Khomeyni passed a fatwa [legal Islamic ruling], not a verdict. Is my understanding correct?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In this regard, I, like you, see it as a fatwa. Of course, there are people in Iran who say that this is considered to be a verdict passed. But since I was close to his eminence Imam Khomeyni, may God have mercy on him, because I was one of his disciples for a long time and was very close to him in the post-revolution era, this is my opinion too. This fatwa is not exclusive to or exclusively passed by his eminence Imam Khomeyni, may God have mercy on him, but it is a fatwa that you could find in the books of jurisprudence written hundreds of years ago. This fatwa is categorized in jurisprudence under the name: Insulting the Prophet. It is not categorized under the issue of apostasy or the book of hudud [punishments under Islamic shari'ah].

Many Sunni and Shiite jurisprudents have issued fatwas that whoever insults the prophet must perish. This fatwa by Imam Khomeyni is not limited to our times but has existed for a long time in his books and those of jurisprudents. It is the Westerners who wanted to turn the issue into this major problem. They were looking for a pretext to create sedition and found their goal in this issue. They will not abandon it as simply as that. Of course, this is not in their interest but will be at our expense. Muslims all over the Islamic world are adhering to their creed and shari'ah and whoever defends this creed enjoys the love and support of Muslims. As you know, this fatwa was then supported at the Islamic Conference. The conference confirmed this fatwa.

[Haykal] Regarding the fatwa issue, is the Iranian state responsible for carrying it out? If it was a ruling, then I would understand it. But I understand that it is a fatwa on the issue of insulting the prophet. Yet, I do not believe that the Iranian state is responsible for punishing anyone who does so because, since before the Iranian revolution and for long after, there have been many in the world who do not believe in Islam and many who reject it. This implies disavowing the message. Are we responsible for punishing these nonbelievers? I understand the fatwa and the reasons for it. But my understanding is that it is a jurisprudence interpretation that only the one who issues can change. His pupils might agree with him and have the same opinion. But the major problem arises when somebody is told to implement this fatwa and it turns into a ruling. Here the world intervenes. I know that the world is looking for excuses to defame the Iranian revolution and I understand this. I can see large-scale and major attempts to encircle the Iranian revolution and the Islamic state in Iran directly because it is targeted. But, are we helping in this? And, if not, then what is the best way for explaining our stand that it is a fatwa and one issued by the imam, his friends, and his pupils but is not a ruling that first, the Iranian state and, second, all Muslims have to implement because it gives Salman Rushdie a privilege that I do not believe he deserves. Why are we punishing him alone from among all other God's creatures who are disavowing?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Several years have passed since this fatwa was issued. No one has found a case where a person or the Iranian state has tried to implement it. There are many fatwas and religious rulings within the framework of fatwas whose implementation are beyond the capability and resources of Muslims and, therefore, they are not implemented. There are many people abroad now who are killers. The ruling in Islam on a killer is clear: he is doomed to be killed and be punished. But they cannot be reached and the punishment cannot be applied to them because they are abroad.

[Haykal] I think that this would be enough for Salman Rushdie. Your excellency has referred to what Iran has been through. I am aware of the tragedy of the Iraq-Iran war. But Mr. President, I wonder: Is it not time that we turned a new page?

I am aware of problems, psychological and practical, from a conflict that dragged on for eight years, but the Arab and Islamic world is passing through a very crucial phase. I imagine that it is time for this world to lick its wounds. Is it not time [pauses] .... We notice, Mr. President, and I will say it bluntly, that the West and Western imperialism, to be more specific, regrettably used Iraq and Iran one against the other. I recall [pauses].... I even once said so to President Saddam Husayn. I said to him: I once was in an Arab country and a king told me [pauses]...a king or a shaykh. He told me this verse of poetry: Snakes could die of a scorpion bite. In other words, they [the West] saw a mighty lion digging its claws into another mighty lion and then let this war take its course, with great devastation to all those involved. Is it not time for a new page to be turned, Mr. President?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We were supposed, after the consolidation of the cease-fire, to make peace with Iraq and cooperate with it. We are convinced that, after all, we have to put the past behind us, think of the future, and look ahead. Had we started cooperation with Iraq, everyone would have been better off. It would have been good cooperation. However, as soon as we started to consolidate cooperation and peace between us, the issue of the occupation of Kuwait came up and this posed a new problem.

Naturally, the war between us and Iraq did not leave us with a good impression about Kuwait, which took Iraq's side. But, after the occupation of Kuwait, we did not see it as wise or advisable to accept that a stronger neighbor had swallowed a smaller and weaker one.

However, we still maintain the same position and conviction that we should have cooperation and peace with Iraq. Unfortunately, the Iraqi Government is still creating and maintaining certain problems. For example, we are persuaded that the issue of POW's should end one day. We have a large number of POW's in Iraq. We have documents and evidence proving that these POW's were in Iraq. The number of these POW's is not small. However, the Iraqi side will not answer us and will not tell us about the fate of these POW's.

For example, we heard them on the radio, we heard the voices of these POW's to whom I am referring. We have seen film clips and their pictures on television. We have seen their photos printed or published in the press; a press interview was conducted with them. Also, the International Committee of the Red Cross gave us a list of some of them. Of course, the fate of these POW's should be resolved.

[Haykal] I understand this and want to move on to another point. But, before I do that, I would venture to say that I understand the depth of the problems and grievances involved but also believe that the current challenges may require, to say the least, a faster pace for these initiatives. However, I will move on to another topic. I ask you, Mr. President, how do you view Gulf security? I would like to point out that I am less than ecstatic about the so-called Damascus Declaration. I am not at all enthusiastic about it and believe that it was stillborn. I know of something called Arab national security, which overlaps with Gulf security. I also know that there is Iranian national security and Pakistani and Indian security. What I cannot understand is a Gulf national security that is divorced from Arab national security or Iranian national security. However, I would like to hear Your Excellency's opinion regarding the problem of Gulf security. The West is ignoring other regional complexities and focusing solely on oil resources, regardless of the human beings who live among and near these resources.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I believe the answer to this question is very obvious because the security of the Persian Gulf is the responsibility of the Persian Gulf countries. They are the ones who should be in charge of it. The best way to attain this objective is to establish very close and sincere cooperation between us. Of course, we do not have any sensitivity toward the Damascus Declaration and what followed it because we do not have any special problem. But Syria and Egypt cannot do anything in this region. If peace can be arranged and established in their own region, then that would be great. I do not believe that they need to shoulder this burden in this region, too. But the roots of the issue concern something different, namely that the interests of the major powers, particularly the United States, require the existence of a dispute in this region so that they can intervene and penetrate through this gap and kill us to maintain their interests.

These are not unknown matters for a person like you. I believe these Westerners had no ambiguity about such issues as the Iran-Iraq war—this Iraqi aggression against us that lasted eight years—the Kuwaiti crisis, and these recent arrangements in the region. They are behind all this and they think only of their interests. I believe the well-known expression divide and conquer is familiar to all our brothers in the Arab countries. It represents an imperialist policy to be applied in this region to protect interests.

[Haykal] What expression?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The divide and conquer expression.

[Haykal] Mr. President, I do not believe that the Americans or others are enthusiastic about the Damascus Declaration. I believe it is a local desire to exploit a particular circumstance. But even after the declaration was made, the Americans want this oil and they are the ones most capable of protecting it. And they have done so. I do not think that they need anyone. But I see that there is a mixup in the concepts of security, and I should admit that I was one of those who was most affected to see pan-Arab security sidelined in the issue of the Gulf security by some of the Gulf countries.

I do not believe that the imperialist plot and the divide and conquer policy applies in the Gulf security issue. The divide and conquer policy does exist in the entire region: between us and Iran and among all Arab countries. However, I believe that the Damascus Declaration was established by local parties who volunteered to play a certain role and thus broached the idea of the Damascus Declaration. However, the Americans, British, and others did not need Egypt and Syria to defend the oilfields. They possess the oil and feel that they are more capable than any other party to defend it.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] When I mentioned the divide and conquer policy, I did not mean the Damascus Declaration. I wanted to say that Persian Gulf security can be undermined by the divide and conquer policy. The Damascus Declaration cannot stand up to the imperialist policy. We, the sons of the Persian Gulf, Iran and the other littoral countries, can stand up to this imperialist scheme, which pursues such a policy. We should cooperate to foil this policy. Iraq must join us in this position.

[Haykal] What about countries other than Iraq? I ask this question, although I know the answer. The six Arab League member states, which are littoral Gulf countries and members of the Joint Defense Agreement, face one country on the other side of the Gulf. The rest of the Arab countries that are in one way or another linked to this group of independent states and peoples should have relations with them. Gulf security must be linked to the Arab countries. I can understand that the Arab countries have interest in Gulf security. I now want to ask what about relations between the Iranian revolution and the Palestinian revolution? When the Iranian revolution broke out in 1979 I was here. The PLO then had massive representation here. I remember that Imam Khomeyni, may God have mercy on his sole, criticized the position of certain Arab countries, primarily Egypt, on the Iranian revolution. He asked me what the Arabs wanted from Iran. He said that the revolution eliminated a regime in Tehran that was hostile to the Arabs. He noted that the revolution also eliminated the Israeli representation and gave the headquarters to the PLO. He also said that he issued instructions making the Arabic language the second language in Iranian schools at all levels of education. What more did the Arabs want? I can understand his position and pain. At that time relations between the Palestinian revolution and Iranian revolution were close. What happened to these relations? How did the Palestinian party reach such an agreement as the Gaza-Jericho accord without consulting with Iran and without even informing it? How did this happen?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We have been and still are cooperative and friendly with all those who have worked for the sake of Palestine. We will maintain this line. It is natural to find different attitudes and approaches. However, the uniform goal must be to work toward saving Palestine.

As far as the so-called Gaza-Jericho agreement is concerned, we were not the only ones who were taken off guard. We were taken by surprise. We were not given prior notice. Those who accompanied him ['Arafat] or cooperated with him along the road were also taken off guard. All of a sudden, they learned that something was afoot. That is what they told us. Even the Syrians, who were involved in negotiations and consultations with the American side over the Palestinian issue, told us that the decision conflicted with what they agreed to during the negotiations. Therefore, the step they took was acceptable to no one.

The truth of the matter is much worse than that. I am talking here about the approach they adopted in dealing with matters and in their action.

[Haykal] Mr. President, I will ask about two things directly linked to that. Has the PLO asked that a high-ranking envoy be sent to Tehran to explain to you why they were compelled to make that decision and in your view, what were the reasons that compelled them to accept such an agreement, which I described at a lecture at the American University in Cairo as one of capitulation?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] No, nothing of the sort was said during my meetings with Yasir 'Arafat in Jakarta, Indonesia, or in Senegal. We talked together for some time, but he did not express such a desire. He tried to insinuate that those steps were tactical, but the truth is something else.

As for why, the development might have been the result of the sense of frustration and disappointment that has gathered over the past years. It seems that the necessary confidence was lacking, even among those who were working together and those who were involved in that venture.

[Haykal] Mr. President, what do you say to those who claim that the matter is the concern of those primarily involved and that there is no grounds for any objection from others. I, for one, am ready to argue that this issue concerns the rest of the Arabs and Muslims. For the Arabs, there is an Israeli threat that exists apart from the Palestinian cause, so to speak. There is also the issue of Jerusalem; one which, in my opinion, concerns all Muslims. What do you, Mr. President, say to those who said the following to Yasir 'Arafat, among them leaders who I believe are in the forefront of their national ranks. They said: The cause is yours. Do what you think is right. Do as you please.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] First of all, as you said, the issue does not concern the Palestinians alone. Truly, the issue has ramifications that spread across the entire Islamic world, including, of course, countries in this region.

There are many countries that have become so engulfed in this issue for so many years that it is a part of their domestic scenes, integrated with their national aspirations and local issues. This is particularly true with regard to holy Jerusalem and the al-Aqsa mosque. As you know, these are issues that no Muslim can ignore. Recently, we heard that the higher court in the usurping Israeli entity decided to take away Jerusalem, sever it for good from its Muslim links, to ensure that Jerusalem will never again come into Muslim hands.

Besides, it is not clear that all those owners of the issue [the Palestinians] have agreed to this course and have approved it. Some are still struggling and truly deserve to be called mujahidin.

How can millions of displaced Palestinians agree to this ambiguous formula, the Gaza-Jericho agreement? As it is, both Gaza and Jericho are overpopulated. They are too small for their current population.

Who would agree that the tens of thousands of Palestinians who have fought, died, or are still fighting and dying for this agreement, one that brings the two areas under Israeli control, are the true owners of the cause? [sentence as heard]

[Haykal] What would you like to say to those who maintain that the balance of forces at present would not give the Palestinians more than they have taken. They have no intrinsic force or Arab assistance: the Arab world is in a state of disarray and, while certain friends of mine here say that the Islamic world is advancing, I believe that the Islamic world is in a state of self-defense. What would you tell those who say that there is no other option? I may oppose this position, but I want to hear your view.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I do not accept this proposition because the Islamic world is very strong. We have massive resources and can save and liberate Palestine even without war. The attempts were made to negotiate with Israel. If attempts were made to make Israel negotiate with the Islamic world leaders, we would have much better results. Even if the Palestinian issue remained unchanged for years, the picture would have been much better from what we see these days. The leaders of the Palestinian struggle signed a document selling all Palestine at a meager price.

[Haykal] I understand and appreciate your statement that the Islamic world is strong. Strength is not only resources but a political will to deal with and use such resources to reach certain goals. This is absent for many reasons, be it foreign penetration, stages of development, or intentions and views of certain leaders. I know that the Islamic world is strong but all its means of strength are scattered. I sometimes recall a verse by the Egyptian poet Shawqi describing the Islamic nation's state while he was making a pilgrimage. He addressed God, saying: Your people in the east and west are like palm fronds in deep slumber. As we can see there are resources but the Islamic will is totally absent. Which are the Islamic states? Pakistan and Indonesia are the largest Islamic nations and both are busy with their own problems. Turkey, the strongest Islamic military power, is far from our concerns. Egypt is in a different position. The homeland of the holy places here and there is having a different situation. The problem is that indeed there is an Islamic world with resources and potential. However, these resources are out of use and a political will to guide it is lacking.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I agree with you that attaining this goal is difficult. The goal of finding a strong political will among the big Islamic powers is difficult but not impossible. If the attempts made to initiate the inauspicious talks, beginning with Camp David, focus on reaching a relative agreement and not saving Palestine, the results would be good and satisfactory. [as heard]. I am convinced that if an agreement were reached between Iran, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Egypt, Algeria, and Syria—and I mention these countries only as an example—on [illegible] policy for saving Palestine, it would create an enormous power that could accomplish major things.

[Haykal] But the fact of the matter is that this did not happen. The facts of the situation show that such an agreement was not reached. At any rate, I do not want to take too much time discussing this point. Mr. President, I usually begin my interviews by asking the people I interview two questions: How frank do you want me to speak, which I asked you before and you graciously said that I could speak freely without any reservations. Another question that I usually ask is: How much time can you give me? I do not want to go beyond my time, but I have many questions, so do we still have time?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in Arabic] If you still have questions that you must get my answers to, then it is all right to continue to talk for a few more minutes.

[Haykal] Excellent. I am very happy with your Arabic. Mr. President, I want to talk a little about the situation inside Iran. The Iranian experiment is important because for the first time, at least in modern history, and amidst severe circumstances, Islam is becoming part of the state's philosophy and makeup. Did this happen, did it materialize, and how?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Over the past years we have witnessed very important progress and made considerable headway toward applying the provisions of the Islamic shari'ah and organizing government affairs on the basis of Islamic rules. Naturally, we have not reached the end of the road yet, but we have gone a very long way toward that end. In the fields of legislation, the judiciary, economic affairs, ethical matters, and social relations, we have very good examples that we can offer. We hope that we will succeed in offering a modern Islamic model that can suit the circumstances and needs of the age.

[Haykal] I will take the role of the protester, not for the purpose of interrogation but to know more. I want to ask if the hudud have been applied in Iran. Every time we speak to our brothers in Egypt they uphold nothing but the issue of the hudud. I do not know whether the hudud are applied in Iran. I believe that there is a fatwa on this issue that says that the hudud are applied in a society where there is already justice. But this is not clear.

Another question is this: When someone tells me we are making the Islamic economy the engine of the world economy, as this is called by the World Bank and the IMF, I think that the U.S. economic power is not an Islamic one and imposes its rules on you whether you like it or not. When I am told about the free market and privatization, for example—and these are the World Bank and IMF recommendations—I ask where is the Islamic application here? How could I say that I am doing anything other than applying the sovereignty of what exists specifically in the Western world when I am following the IMF recommendations?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] By the way, on the issue of the Islamic bank we were ready and took everything into account, even before the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran, to have an Islamic bank. We benefited in this respect from the writings of his eminence Ayatollah al-Sadr, who was martyred in Iraq. Regarding the law on organizing banking affairs, the Islamic Shura Council ratified this law on the basis of the fatwas issued by Muslim 'ulemas. The Council for the Protection of the Constitution, which supervises the laws enacted to ensure that they comply with the Islamic shari'ah and Islamic jurisprudence criteria, backed this law and we applied it. Our banks do not have any problems now.

[Haykal] Mr. President, I am not talking about the banking systems in Iran but about the world economic order. We are a small part of this order and we have to follow in its footsteps. These footsteps are laid down by the World Bank and the IMF. Where is the choice to say whether it is Islamic or non-Islamic?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We have Islamic tenets when it comes to economic contacts with the world beyond the Islamic sphere. The shari'ah has defined and clarified this for us. We deal with whatever they have and there is no problem. That is, this does not create a problem for us.

[Haykal] Mr. President, why don't we call it an Islamic economy in this case? I, and here I must admit that this might be a shortcoming on my part and I hope to be convinced, do not understand what is meant by an Islamic foreign policy and an Islamic economic policy. I understand that there is economic policy and there is foreign policy that is governed by interests, ties between powers, balances, actions, etc. But I fear that at times we are involving Islam in issues it has not dealt with and that it has left an open license to the rejuvenated human mind that is capable of discerning things throughout the ages.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We have the principle of interpretative judgment in Islamic jurisprudence. In Shiite jurisprudence, the door to interpretative judgment has never been closed and has always been open, contrary to the views of some of our Sunni brothers who closed this door at a certain period in Islamic history. Interpretative judgment handles such questions and the interpreter acts whenever a problem arises with the appropriate view that deals with this problem and therefore solves it. We have not, in fact, faced any problem of any kind, and if you find any problem you can identify it.

[Haykal] I am happy that the door to interpretative judgment is open. I know that for Sunnis the door to individual interpretation has been officially closed, but in reality it has not been shut altogether. For instance, [late imam of al-Azhar mosque] Shaykh Shaltut passed fatwas that were influenced by the Shiite jurisprudence. Also, [late justice minister in Egypt] Dr. al-Sanhuri made fatwas on the issue of inheritance that were influenced by the Shiite jurists. But generally speaking, I am afraid that the Arab world seems unable to see the changes of the age and, even in its judgments, seems unable to realize that there are new facts in this world. It seems to be shackled in some cases by strict and transitory slogans. Speaking of my own experiment in Egypt, where you know that I was imprisoned for three months—not a very long time, but it was nice—I met some of our brothers who are called extremists and I do not know why they are given that name. Whenever you talk to them about Islam or about the problems of life, they say two things: first, that these are earthly, not religious, matters and they immediately quote the Koranic verse: I have only created jinns and men, that they may serve Me. It is as if man's message on earth is only to pray, which I believe is a faulty oversimplification of the matter. Second, they always say that Islamic society is that where the hudud are applied. This is harmful to the issue of interpretative judgment because when matters become so rigid, the other party engaged in the dialogue will hesitate and stop talking. In the end, we find ourselves in a state of impotence, where the hudud are held sacred and life is disregarded.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in Arabic] You know that in the Shiite and Sunni jurisprudence there are rules that we follow. For instance, whatever reason dictates is followed by the legislator, and the opposite is true. This is an applicable rule in our jurisprudence.

[Haykal] I am very happy that you said this in Arabic; perhaps it will reach some people.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] On this basis, reason is a source of legislation for us. We view the Koran, the Prophet's tradition, consensus, and reason as the four sources of the provisions of Islamic shari'ah. Of course, some of our fellow Sunni jurists add analogy as a source of legislation, but for us the Koran, the Prophet's traditions, consensus, and reason are the four sources of Islamic legislation. Through this rich and fertile source of interpretation that we have, any problem that may obstruct us in any of the developments that we may come across could be tackled and resolved, and we do not face any problem regarding this approach.

[Haykal] I am happy to hear this, Mr. President. I hope the role of reason will increase somewhat in the coming stage because we are facing changes that require a lot of interpretative judgments. At any rate, I will get away from this issue.

I would like to ask you a semi-personal question: How were you able to adjust to the logic and policies of the state. You have come from the revolution's world. The state's world is unfamiliar to you, particularly the Iranian state. I have seen the Iranian state in previous periods and am aware of the views that governed it. As a person with a religious background, how were you able to adjust to the state's world?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We on our part see no contradiction between a person being revolutionary on the one hand and operating within the bounds of the state and adjusting to conditions imposed by the state and the administration of state affairs. We do not consider revolution as beyond the framework of reasonable methods in conducting state affairs. This view stems from our beliefs that we must not be radical in our revolutionary stance and not abandon principles and values in our handling of state affairs. We are not dogmatic. We do not support absolutism. We think that matters are relative, and this must be taken into consideration.

[Haykal] Mr. President, I am very happy to hear this. One of our biggest problems in the Islamic world has been and still is the relationship between the absolute and the relative. Regrettably, some of the people who speak in the name of religion speak in absolute terms and call on people to do what is beyond their capability in view of their history. There is a problem of absolute demands in the name of religion. Therefore, I am happy to hear President Hashemi-Rafsanjani talk about relativity, people, and history instead of absolutism and sweeping generalities that sometimes cause us to commit terrible pitfalls.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in Arabic] You know the Koran. The prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, says: Ta-Ha, we have not sent down the Koran to thee to be (an occasion) for thy distress. [Koranic verse] It is known that the prophet, God's prayers and peace be upon him, is saying that man can face problems, and some of his goals may not be achieved. This consolation came from heaven so man can defend himself. The Koran is a consolation to the prophet. He knew that some things cannot be achieved on this earth. There are many things. You know the history of Islam. Some dictates came down in another year of [words indistinct] the prophet. [words indistinct], but it is known that Islam is not rigid, incapable of (?adjusting) to matters.

[Haykal] I want some people in the Arab world to hear the answer to the following question. Since arriving in Tehran, I have asked many friends and some of the people I met: What has the Islamic revolution in Iran given the ordinary Iranian citizen? I heard some answers most of which can be categorized as metaphysical, such as that the decisionmaking now takes place in Iran. I understand this point. Another answer has been that the people are now their own masters. I understand that too. But I need someone to give me a direct answer: What, in particular, has the Iranian citizen gained from the Islamic revolution in Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] If you meet our youth, that is, the young men and women of the revolution, the new generation raised during the revolution, you will notice that their thinking and morals have changed a great deal since the prerevolution tyranny.

The influence of the revolution and its activity has formed a new generation with new values and new behavior. Of course, many have not been strongly influenced by the revolution's values and morals. But the majority, the essence, have been influenced and changed.

[Haykal] I hope I am not going beyond the limit in asking the following question on the same topic. What do you have to say to those who claim there are deviations within the Islamic state and how does the Islamic state deal with such deviations?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] What deviations are you talking about?

[Haykal] For example, in some Western newspapers, I read that some of those who speak in the name of religion have started leading a life of extravagance, like some of the officers in the Arab world, for example. I also read things in the Western press about attempts to abuse office. How does a society of Islamic revolution deal with this? How does it track it down and how does it deal with it?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Such talk is incorrect. Most people in Iran, even the well-to-do, live moderately. I believe that everyone adheres to and considers the Islamic logic that the Koran has taught us: To adopt a policy of moderation and avoid extremes. "Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach so that thou become blameworthy and destitute." [Koranic verse] This verse gives us the correct policy we must follow in life.

[Haykal] I have three questions and I would like to get short answers. The first question is: How could the Islamic world help the former Soviet republics in Central Asia? We know they are Islamic republics and the Islamic world stands unable to help them while Israel presses ahead to establish relations with Kazakhstan, for example.

My second question is: As a head of the Iranian state, what do you think is the most important change that could help administer your country's affairs in relation with the world? And my third question is: What are you reading now? What book are you reading apart from the state's reports and the holy Koran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The newly independent republics that broke away from the former Soviet Union have created a new issue for the Islamic world. This is an important historic opportunity for the Muslim world. These republics were a part of a whole entity within a specific group. They led a life where they were dependent on and linked with that group. They were like provinces in one country. It seems there has been a decision to keep these republics dependent on and linked with Russia more than they were.

But the challenge facing these republics is that they should gradually sever their links with Russia and the group to which they belonged. The Muslim world must help these republics find an alternative to their subservience to the former Russians so that they can find a response to their pressing need. There is a market and there are vast production resources there. They are linked with Russia by their market and their raw material needs. Many republics have their currency linked with Russia. Even worse is that their transport is also linked with Russia. The Islamic world must prepare to meet the needs of these republics gradually. Geographically, Iran is in a strategic position on prices compared with the rest of the Muslim world.

[Haykal] But what could Iran give alone?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We can open roads for them and we can link them with the foreign world. This is a vital and important issue for them. We are now implementing this project, which involves sea, land, and air routes as well as railroads. This is in addition to telecommunications.

We can also provide them with supplies and consumer goods. Iran can give much and, therefore, Iran must be a means for these supplies to get to these republics. We can also purchase from them at world prices all the goods that they are compelled to sell to Russia at very low prices. These goods include cotton, meat, gas, oil, and many other items. They are in dire need of education and training because they do not have the necessary know-how to steer the country's affairs such as customs services and banking.

[Haykal] One of these republics is a nuclear state. Kazakhstan is a nuclear state and is reported to be assisting Iran in its nuclear project. Isn't there a major campaign against the nuclear, chemical, and missile capabilities of Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] This is not what we want from Kazakhstan, because we are not after such things. Our conviction is that we will not succeed in this nuclear race. So, we must cancel this nuclear project ...

[Haykal interrupts] Cancel?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes.

[Haykal] And the chemical and medium-range missile project?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] A missile industry exists in Iran.

[Haykal] This means there is no nuclear and chemical industry, but there is interest in missiles. Is this correct?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Missile technology in Iran is relatively strong.

[Haykal] I will move to the next question. Particular phenomena in current world developments impose themselves on you. What development more than any other in this age makes you pause?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] There are many issues. There is a long list of important changes and developments. For example, the new world order.

[Haykal] Is there a new world order?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The United States is looking for a world with one pole as opposed to two. This remains the important issue for all the world until something else happens. Of course, the past few years have proved that the United States cannot achieve that.

Our other issue is the same as that of the Persian Gulf. We are convinced that close cooperation and strong friendship must exist. We are doing our best to develop the existing confidence, because the issue is still not at the desired level. In some cases we experience some inconsiderate positions by some of our neighbors; we try to disregard these. There is a poem that says: Against me, he roars like a lion, but in war, he becomes a tremulous ostrich. I refer to those who are not present on the main fronts, but when they face us they make emphatic threats.

The Palestinian issue must be their main issue. But they turn the Palestinian issue into one of confrontation with Iran.

[Haykal] It is not an issue of confrontation with Iran. But, regrettably, sometimes it appears that Israel's main objective right now is Iran. I know that during the Israeli foreign minister's recent visit to Cairo, he sat with some officials for 90 minutes. About 45 minutes were devoted to the Iranian danger. He sat with Egyptian intellectuals and Egyptians interested in political studies and half of what he discussed was the Iranian danger. I can see that there is something of this sort. But I want to say that there are many people in the Arab world who wish to remove all unnatural barriers and artificial obstacles, and build bridges between the Arab capitals and Tehran—between Tehran and Baghdad, Tehran and Cairo, Tehran and Damascus, and even Tehran and Riyadh. But this requires an effort by Iran, which should not cease to declare its intentions. Sometimes there is misunderstanding because intentions are not clear. Sometimes you do not address the Arab world.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes, that's right. Iran should pose the chief danger to the Israeli entity. But Israel has tried to give the impression to some neighboring countries and others further away that Iran is the chief threat to them. Israel has been trying to suggest that the Iranian threat is directed at those countries in a bid to deflect the Iranian danger from itself. This is one issue that must be correctly portrayed. Colonialist and imperialist mouthpieces and the media of international monopolies constantly propagate this impression. We must correct this idea and declare that Iran is everyone's true friend. Of course, when it comes to our interests, we are confronting other important issues in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Somalia, and even Kashmir. We view all these issues as ours too. We devote time and resources to them. We sense the Iraqi or Lebanese people's problems. We regret and are harmed by these problems.

[Haykal] I read a banned UNICEF report that 0.5 million Iraqi children could die from malnutrition next year.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes.

[Haykal] Sad indeed. I think I have taken too much of your time, but one last question remains: What book or article did you read recently that you liked or that struck you as having new ideas?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I have no ready reply; I receive numerous books and articles that concern us in one way or another. I scan them, devoting hours to the purpose. We are reading men. As men of religion, our chief concern is learning and reading before we embark on political action. But there is no obvious reply.

[Haykal] One final remark. Is it too optimistic to hope or wonder when we will see you in Cairo? Is there any hope that this will happen soon or is it a flight of fancy?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We hoped to go to Cairo and visit al-Azhar and the Egyptian people, but we did not except things to take the course they have. We still hope. I hope we will succeed in solving our problems and visit to see those things.

[Haykal] I thank you very much for your time. I will take my leave now. I realize the effort you have made. I am also very happy about what you said in good Arabic. A thousand thanks for your frankness.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Thank you.

Pilot: Hijacked Iranians Not Well Treated by Iraqis

LD0212140493 Tehran IRNA in English 1320 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Qasr-e Shirin, Kermanshah Prov., Dec. 2, IRNA—The Iraqi security officers proposed to grant asylum to the passengers and crew of the hijacked Iranian plane, pilot of the plane, Parviz Bustani, told IRNA upon arrirval in this western city Thursday [2 December].

The pilot of the hijacked Fokker Friendship F-27, who crossed into Iran through the Khosravi border point, on Iran-Iraq border, along with 30 other Iranians this morning, added that the al-Basrah airport officials did not treat them properly.

Bustani said that the Iraqis failed to show good manners and defied the orders of the Iraqi officials who upon the landing of the Iranian plane had advised them to be nice to the Iranians.

"The Iranian passengers were denied food during the 8-hour journey from al-Basrah to the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. The Iranians were exhausted and the children were crying for food," said the pilot whose plane was commandeered to al-Basrah by a member of the terrorist Mujahideen [Mojahedin-e] Khalq Organization (MKO) last Monday on a domestic flight.

Bustani said that the hijacker, 'Ali Reza Karami Kheyrabadi, had forced him to divert the flight shortly after take-off by pulling a handgun.

Foreign Ministry Official Remarks on Punishing Hijacker

NC0212174893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] The passengers of the Iranian friendship airplane hijacked a few days ago over the country's southern sky and taken to al-Basrah will return to the country from Baghdad by bus.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the 38 [as heard] passengers are well. In an interview with the legal director of the Foreign Ministry, our correspondent asked about the trial and punishment of the hijacker. Aminian explained that based on the 1970 convention of which the Iraqi Government is also a signatory, the terrorist who hijacked the plane should be handed over to the Iranian Government or be tried in Iraq.

Cabinet Debates Second Five-Year Development Plan

LD0212212493 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] The cabinet held an extraordinary session today chaired by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani debating the second five-year economic, social, and cultural development plan.

The cabinet ended its debate on the plan by assessing and making decisions on sections of the plan concerning communications, energy, quantitative and qualitative aims, basic guidelines, and policies and administrative programs.

Decisions on new proposals made by administrative organs as well as the final compilation of the plan was postponed to the future sessions.

Official Says Foreign Debt Has Reached $28 Billion

NC0212183993 Paris AFP in English 1427 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 2 (AFP)—Iran owes 28 billion dollars in foreign debts, of which eight billion dollars are overdue, the head of the chamber of commerce said.

'Ali Naghi Khamushi, quoted by SALAM newspaper on Thursday [2 December], told a public meeting that four billion dollars in back payments had been refinanced, implying this was apart from the eight billion dollars.

MP Mohammad Reza Bahonar, also at the meeting, said the country's foreign debt was expected to rise to 30 billion dollars by the end of the Iranian year, March 21, 1994.

The level of debt was "unprecedented" in Iran's history and could jeopardize its reputation and credit, he warned.

It was the first time that Iranian officials disclosed such a high sum for the country's foreign debt, with the figures almost matching the estimates of Western sources.

Western economic experts say Iran has rescheduled or refinanced four billion dollars of its debts, from total arrears of 12 billion dollars, through German, Japanese and French banks.

Tehran is still working with the Japanese chamber of commerce and several German banks to reschedule the rest of its overdue debts, they said.

Iran has also been negotiating with its major economic partners, notably European countries, to reach a multilateral agreement on credit guarantees to reschedule its public debts.

The rise in debt is attributed to a sharp rise in imports from 1990 to 1992—70 billion dollars—and a stagnation in oil prices, which account for 90 percent of Iran's earnings.

The government slashed imports to 10 billion dollars in 1993.

Impact of Free Trade Zones Reviewed

NC0212180793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Commentary by News Commentaries Group]

[Text] According to Article 19 of the Laws on the First Social, Economic, and Cultural Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the government is permitted to establish free trade and industrial zones in various parts of the country. Thus, Kish, Qeshm, and Chah Bahar have been declared as free zones.

From the experts' point of view, free trade and industrial zones are effective instruments for implementing the strategy of boosting exports, and for diversifying and replacing single-commodity exports. In the past two decades, the establishment of free trade zones and ports all over the world has received a major impetus and according to latest figures, more than 400 such zones and free ports, which handle more than 20 percent of the annual economic exchanges worldwide, exist in the world .

Experts state that free trade zones generate employment, allow for the optimum exploitation of the work force and the transfer of technology, attract foreign investment, and boost the foreign exchange reserves of their respective countries. In any case, whenever such a free zone becomes operational with the objective of bolstering exports and providing incentives for heavy and medium production, one should examine the extent to which it has been successful in achieving its objectives.

According to experts, the economic direction of the Kish free trade zone over the past few years indicates that the investment made in this region was to facilitate imports to the country in general, instead of serving as a platform for the country's exports. This island had metamorphosed into a center for imports of commodities from the Far East, which were transferred to the hinterland by the passengers and by availing of the customs exemption of these goods. Thus, the demand for indigenous products was adversely affected.

In the Qeshm region, even though measures were initially intended to create an industrial pole in the Persian Gulf region, this island merely acted as a conduit for the passage of goods to Bandar-e 'Abbas. Now, the committee that regulates the foreign exchange market has reduced the customs exemption of the free trade zones by more than one-third. This correct measure has, on one hand, decreased the demand for the goods currently being imported by the free ports, and, on the other, it has restricted the major importers—who had been responsible for the ingress of vast quantities of goods to the free ports and subsequently into the hinterland—from continuing this policy. This will also affect the unnecessary demand for foreign exchange.

Experts believe that the government's recent policy of limiting the import of goods from the free ports and the strengthening of the management of these ports will ensure a suitable opportunity to capitalize on past experience and to steer the free zones of the country toward their actual objectives.

In any case, the Islamic Republic of Iran, which is in general endowed with manpower and regional advantages, can—by implementing a cohesive and coordinated policy—expand the free ports and use them to decrease the level of unemployment, eliminate deprivation, boost exports and technology transfer, and ameliorate the balance of payments situation.

Commentary Urges Economic Help for 'Oppressed'

LD0212211593 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1600 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Ever since the discovery of oil in Iran and until the victory of the Islamic revolution, suitable conditions had never existed for the correct use of oil in the country's economy due to the rule of dependent regimes. On the contrary, oil itself became the cause for a whole host of dependency. The basing of the country's economy on the export of oil during the Pahlavi regime was, in fact, the least principled use of this source of wealth.

With the victory of the Islamic revolution, correct use of oil income for the implementation of development and infrastructural plans became part of the economic agenda of the government. However, due to the start of the imposed [Iran-Iraq] war and the conspiracies of world arrogance, there was no possibility of adopting proper plans for making the best use of the oil income.

With the ending of the imposed war, and the need for the reconstruction of the country, it was necessary to change the wartime economic policies. Therefore, the government drew up and implemented the first five year economic, social, and cultural plan from the year 1368 [1989]. This plan, which aimed at achieving economic balance, included measures such as moving toward the market economy, adopting an appropriate foreign exchange system, increasing development investments, encouraging nonoil exports in order to reduce dependence upon oil income, and allowing free imports.

Now that the first development plan is in its final year, a look at the record of the past few years reveals the success of the government in many fields, such as the elimination of borrowing from the banking system, increasing domestic products, and strengthening the capabilities of the country's infrastructure. It seems that important steps have been taken toward the reconstruction of the economic system of the country.

However, on the eve of the drafting of the second development plan, a realistic assessment of all the past experiences can provide a guiding light for all the economic policy makers of the country, so that the points of strength can be continued in the second plan and the weak points can be eliminated.

The most important problem that the country's economy is facing is excessive dependence upon shaky oil income. In recent years, the nonoil exports have not grown in keeping with the capabilities and resources of the country. Therefore, with fluctuations in the price of oil and changes in foreign exchange earnings, economic plans are disrupted.

Therefore, a number of economic experts believe that under present conditions, when the country is passing through the phase of reconstruction and development, paying greater attention to domestic resources can immunize us against international developments in economic and political fields. At the same time, this important issue should be brought to the attention of the people and officials. In all countries that have experienced war, the post-war period is a time of economic stringency and thrift.

Consequently, it is a source of pain to all those who are concerned about national economy that part of the national resources are wasted on the importation of a large number of luxurious and useless commodities, the holding of useless seminars, unnecessary trips, and the purchase of expensive imported cars; while simple living and economizing have lost their attraction compared to the early years of the revolution.

Therefore, the implementation of economic stringency and saving is a clear necessity for reduction in expenses, so that the resources that have been saved can be used for investment in the country. On the other hand, another essential and indisputable principle of Islamic economy is supporting the oppressed and expanding social justice. Even nondeliberate negligence of these principles can move the country toward wrong models. [passage omitted]

Economic growth will be valuable only when it is accompanied by justice and equity, paying attention to the deprived strata in the society. If we have to make a choice between achieving economic growth and the implementation of social justice, the implementation of social justice enjoys priority over economic growth; so that the present generation, witnessing the determination of the officials in achieving social justice, will feel duty bound to have an active participation in defending the Islamic revolution.

In any case, under present conditions, and on the eve of the drafting of the second development plan, the economy of a country like Iran that has experienced a decade of political and economic pressures exerted by big powers, and which has proudly emerged out of an eight-year-long war requires basic review in a number of areas. The extension of economizing, the expansion of policies for supporting the oppressed, the propagation of the culture for making use of domestic goods, and the encouragement of the policy of hard work are among the causes that will increase the national output and will give us hope for a healthy economy and balanced use of God-given resources.

Officials Discuss Activities of Disabled Foundation

LD0212145293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0900 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Studio interview with Brigadier General Mohsen Rafiqdust, chairman of the Foundation of the Oppressed and Disabled, and Heydari-Malayer, director general of the Foundation's societies and shareholding affairs, by unidentified correspondent; from the "In Line With People, In Step With Officials" program—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] Mr. Rafiqdust, it would be useful if you would please tell us more about the economic section of the Foundation. How would you describe it and how extensive is it?

[Rafiqdust] Well, you are aware that the bulk of the assets at the disposal of the Foundation are the assets of the cursed [Pahlavi] family of the former monarch, and the rest of the assets which did not belong to them and were confiscated by the courts and placed at the disposal of this Foundation. Today we are managing a plant which differs a lot from what it was in its early days; some of the sections have grown and others have become smaller. The way we manage the economic section is through seven specialized economic organizations [sazman], with three support deputies, and one deputy in charge of assignments. I will say more about this later. The specialized organizations are the industries, mines, agriculture, commerce, development and housing, and transport organizations as well as the organization for leisure and travel centers. [passage omitted]

We also have a deputy in charge of the department of properties and assets which administers the affairs of all the rest of the assets of the Foundation that do not fall under the management of the [economic] organizations. For instance, there may be a garden, or houses and lands that are unprofitable. Anything that does not fall under the management of the economic organizations' deputies falls under the management of the deputy in charge of properties and assets who sells these gradually and uses the revenue to fulfill some of the Foundation's commitments and also to invest in the economic sections. There is a deputy in charge of the economics and planning department where all the Foundation's planning and coordination of the organizations and their deputies are carried out. And we also have a deputy in charge of the executive affairs of the poor [mahrumin]. In addition, there is the head office for the ownership of shares and administration of associations [majame']. This office takes care of the sales and purchases of the shares of the economic organizations and the administration of the [Foundation's] general associations.

Regarding the economic organizations, in the Foundation's industries section, we have 120 active factories and a number of projects, 37 in all, which are in the process of being implemented. In the development section, we have 63 large building and development companies and 31 factories producing building materials. In the agricultural section we have 91 companies which are big agricultural and agro-business companies. As to the leisure and travel organization, we have 25 companies and institutions and 80 companies in the agriculture section.

We now have a section for sea transportation in the transportation organization—the Foundation's Shipping Company—and we also have the land transportation section. God willing, we are also in the process of creating an air company with permission granted to us by the Ministry of Roads and Transport. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Could you please tell us more about how the different activities of the organizations are coordinated and administered.

[Rafiqdust] Every organization has a board of directors which has five members consisting of the director general who is the deputy head of the economic sector of the Foundation; the deputy for economic and planning; the director general for ownership of shares; the managing director of the organization; and another person who is appointed by the managing director. These five persons are on the board of directors. General issues concerning the economic section of the Foundation are discussed in a council named the policy-making council, and by five economists in the country appointed by myself. They formulate the general policy. Coordination between the economic organizations is carried out through meetings organized by the heads of the economic organizations and their deputies. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr. Heydari-Malayer, when there is talk of ownership and shares, who are we referring to here in so far as the Foundation is concerned?

[Heydari-Malayer] The esteemed position of the velayat-e faqih [supreme jurisconsult] is the overall owner of the Foundation. The ownership right has been transferred, via the representative of the leader and the head of the Foundation, to the head office of the association and ownership of shares. The duty of this office, generally, is to discharge this responsibility and to supervise the economic activities of the economic units and examine and review their reports and accounts. [passage omitted]

[Rafiqdust] I'd just like to say something about the shareholders. This foundation belongs to the people of Iran. It is administered on the basis of the esteemed vali-ye faqih's decree as the person under whose shadow the people of Iran are being administered. There is no private owner. Of course, we do have companies where 50 percent of the shares belong to the public and 50 percent to us. The 50 percent which belongs to us belongs to the Iranian nation of course. [passage omitted]

With regards to the selfless devotees [war disabled]: We have established [economic] units specifically for the selfless devotees in some parts of the country, as far as we were able to. These amount to 59 units now. A further number are in the process of being set up. The aim is self-employment for them—let me say something at this point. There are over 5,000—5,700 to be exact—dear selfless devotees who have lost their ability to work; that is, they are 70 percent and over disabled. [passage omitted] We have special programs for this category. We also have approximately 30,000 who are 50-70 percent disabled. The rest of our dear selfless devotees are able to work and we have to arrange for them to have suitable work. This is included in our programs. I should also say that the rate of unemployment, overall, among our dear selfless devotees, is less than the average. [passage omitted]

And this is their right; these brothers have gone to the fronts as combatants and have became disabled in one way or another, for God. So they should have this priority today, of suffering less unemployment. But at the same time, we are also trying not to create a self-defeating situation. We have to also think about the efficiency of the factory. For instance, in the administration department of the selfless devotees, out of the 5,700 personnel who work there, 1,857 are selfless devotees. They are managing themselves. But elsewhere, we have seen that if their numbers exceed this, mobility and activities are reduced. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Spokesman on Pressler Visit, Foreign Aid Act

BK0112162993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 1 Dec 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed the hope that a rewrite of the American Foreign Assistance Act to be undertaken by Congress will further the objectives of nuclear nonproliferation jointly shared by the United States and Pakistan. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad today that Pakistan views the Pressler Amendment as a discriminatory law. He said Senator Pressler is likely to visit Pakistan by the middle of this month, and Pakistan will try to put across its point of view on the discriminatory nature of this law.

Replying to a question, the spokesman said Pakistan is continuously negotiating with different governments on different means to achieve the objectives of nonproliferation in South Asia. He, however, said Pakistan has not received any specific proposal from the United States recently.

Government Rejects Unilateral Nuclear Inspection

BK0212101793 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 2 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by Maulana Baabar]

[Text] Islamabad: The government Wednesday categorically stated it would accept inspection of its nuclear instalations only on a regional basis.

Explaining the government's policy regarding the interest of the Clinton administration in inspecting the nuclear installations, a Foreign Office spokesman said: "Consultations on this issue continue from time to time, including with the United States, but we will accept inspection only on a regional basis."

Reiterating the country's broad policy objectives on nuclear non- proliferation in South Asia, the spokesman said it should be "on a non-discriminatory basis and, create reasonable balance in conventional armed strength." He said Pakistan had always expressed its desire for achieving non-proliferation either through bilateral arrangement with India or on a regional basis and had given many proposals on this count.

While welcoming the assessment of the State Department regarding the nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia, the spokesman said the new aid bill omitted the country-specific Pressier Amendment and, and the Pressler 'standards' would be evenly applied to all countries. But, he said, the draft of the bill was not available.

The spokesman initially declined to comment on the new US aid bill, saying: "It is not for us to comment on the US legislation", as its had already been explained by a State Department spokeswoman Monday.

But when reminded by a journalist that he did not hesitate to comment on the Pressler Amendment which was also a US legislation, he said the government would wait before it reveals its official position on the new US foreign aid legislation. "We will see what form it will take, then we will comment," he said.

On the Indo-Pak talks, the spokesman said Pakistan hoped India would improve situation in held Kashmir for "purposeful and meaningful negotiations".

The spokesman also announced that Foreign Minister Sardar Assef and his Indian counterpart Danesh Singh would meet in Dhaka at the 13th Session of the Saarc Council of Ministers meeting, starting December 4. However, it would be an informal meeting and there was no fixed agenda, he added.

There is as yet no decision regarding Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to New Delhi to attend the

UNESCO meeting. The dates for Bhutto's China visit have been confirmed and she would pay an official visit to that country from December 27-29.

The government once against expressed its concern regarding the continued fighting in Afghanistan. In this regard, the Afghan Foreign Minister had been informed that Pakistan considered there was no military solution to the infighting in his country. "Without taking sides we are willing to bring about peace," he said.

Bhutto Reiterates Position on Nuclear Program

BK0212150793 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Launching the first indigenous locomotive at a ceremony in Risalpur today, the prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, said it is an historic event which marks Pakistan's entry into the comity of nations manufacturing locomotives.

[Begin Bhutto recording] Pakistan has entered into the community of nations who are producing their own locomotives. This momentous occasion of commissioning Pakistan's first locally manufactured locomotive is indeed an historic milestone in railways' industrial capacity as well as the country's history. [applause] Development activity in the country gives us satisfaction and pride. Risalpur is one of the backward areas of Pakistan. The establishment of a locomotive factory here will give a boost to the area and to the Frontier Province. The Risalpur Locomotive Factory is a tribute to the resilience of the workers of Pakistan Railways. This factory speaks volumes of the talents, the skills, the capability of all those who worked day and night in the respective positions in the Railways workshop. [end recording]

The prime minister also spoke about the collaboration between Pakistan and Japan in the economic and technogical fields and said on a number of international issues Pakistan and Japan share common perception.

[Begin Bhutto recording] We have benefited immensely from Japanese investment and technical assistance in locomotives, in the automobile industry, fertilizer production and power generation. We have worked together in the field of economy as well as in the sphere of science and technology. The inauguration today of this locomotive factory and the launching of the first locomotive built is a testimony of our growing ties in the fields of science, technology, and economy. Japan and Pakistan share similar views in the field of foreign policy. Both countries seek to build a world where there is a limitation and reduction of strategic weapons. We share the same concern about nuclear proliferation, about human rights, and narcotics control. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Talking to newsmen before her departure from Risalpur, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said the Kalabagh dam will be built only if all the four provinces agree to it. The prime minister said the NWFP [North-west Frontier Province] and Sindh have some reservations on the constructions of this dam. We will negotiate with these provinces and then go for it if a consensus emerges.

On the country's nuclear program, she reiterated in categorical terms that it would not be rolled back.

PPP Wins Majority of Seats in By-Election

BK0312080493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 3 Dec 93

[Text] By-elections were held yesterday for 12 National Assembly and 10 provincial assembly seats. Unofficial results have been announced for 11 National Assembly and all 10 provincial assembly seats. The announcement of the result for a National Assembly seat—Constituency NA-95 Lahore-4—has been withheld per the verdict of the Lahore High Court. The parties' position for National Assembly seats follows:

Pakistan People's Party [PPP]—Six
Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Sharif group [PML-N]—Three
Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party—One and
Independents—One.

The parties' position in the by-elections for provincial assembly seats follows:

The PPP won four seats in Punjab and one in Sindh. The PML-N won one seat each in Punjab and North-West Frontier Province. In Punjab, the Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo group secured two seats whereas the Mutahida Deeni Mahaz got one seat.

A majority of the seats in the by-election to the national and provincial assemblies have been secured by the PPP.

Sharif Acusses Bhutto of Poll Rigging, Violence

BK0212170093 Hong Kong AFP in English 1637 GMT 2 Dec 93

[Text] Lahore, Pakistan, Dec 2 (AFP)—Pakistan's main opposition leader Nawaz Sharif said he escaped what he called an attempt on his life here Thursday during polling in the by-elections.

Addressing a news conference, the former prime minister said he was fired upon near a polling centre from the roof of a building.

"God has saved me," Sharif said, accusing Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and its allies of indulging in "rigging and violence."

But, PPP Secretary General Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed termed Sharif's claim a "drama."

"We have the highest regard for political opponents," he told reporters.

Another PPP leader, Faisal Saleh Hayat, an adviser to the provincial government, also alleged that shots had been fired at him by workers of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML), in a report lodged with the police.

Sharif's brother, Shahbaz, accused Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari of planning the "attack' on the PML leader and his companions.

The opposition leader annouced his party would "resist and fight" the Bhutto government "from now onward."

Police said no report had been made to any police station until late Thursday about the alleged firing on Sharif.

By-elections were held in Pakistan Thursday in 22 constituencies to fill vacant seats in the national and provincial assemblies.

According to first unofficial results, the PPP won a National Assembly seat as well as a Punjab assembly seat in the city of Faislabad.

The outcome in three prestigious National Assembly constituencies in Lahore, a stronghold of Sharif, was not known until late Thursday.